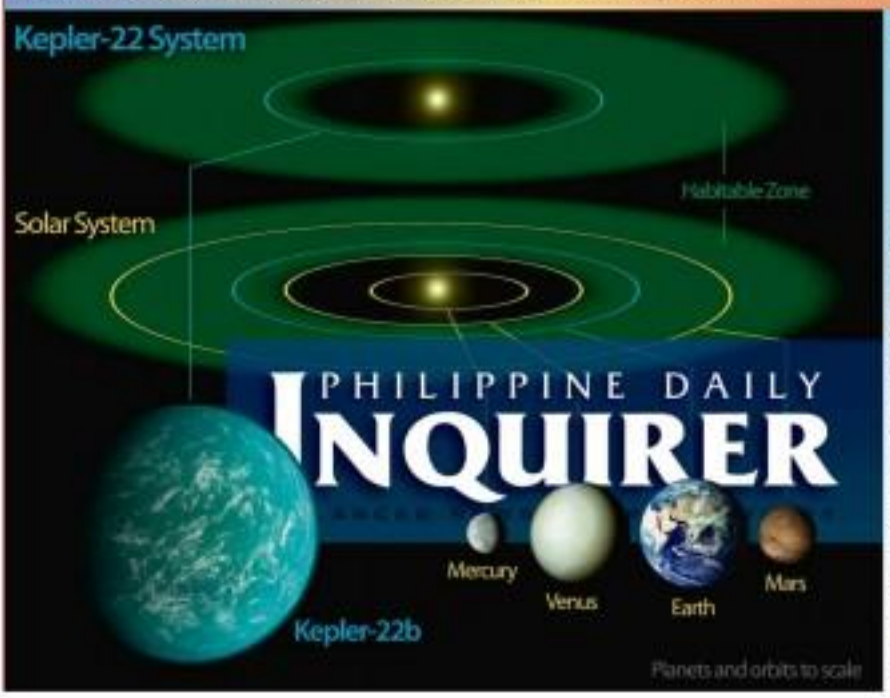
Wednesday, December 7, 2011 ★★ 11 sections / Vol. 26 / No. 362 P18 | www.inquirer.net | Mobile Alert: Text INQ ON (BREAKING) to 4467
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER 990AM



New planet with mall-like climate found

WASHINGTON—A newly discovered planet is eerily similar to Earth and is sitting outside Earth's solar system in what seems to be the ideal place for life, except for one hitch. It is a bit too big.

The planet is a track in the middle of what astronomers call the Goldilocks zone, that hard-to-find place that is not too hot, not too cold, where water, which is essential for life, does not freeze or boil. And it has a shopping

NEW PLANET | A19

EARTH CONDITIONS This Nasa artist's illustration shows Kepler-22b, a planet known to circle the habitable zone of a sun-like star. In another step toward finding Earth-like planets that may hold life, Nasa said the Kepler space telescope had confirmed its first-ever planet in a habitable zone outside our solar system. Confirmation means that astronomers have seen it crossing in front of its star three times. But it doesn't mean that astronomers know whether life actually exists there, simply that the conditions are right. AP

Palace-SC fight escalates

Malacañang: No justice expected from high court

By Norman Bordadora, Christine O. Avendaño and Cynthia D. Balana

PALACE officials yesterday joined President Aquino in stepping up attacks against the Supreme Court, warning magistrates against obstructing a popular reformist agenda and raising the specter of a people power uprising against them.

At the Christmas party for the Liberal Party in Malacañang, Mr. Aquino rallied his troops to help him fulfill his campaign promise to prosecute misdeeds allegedly committed during the previous Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo administration.

"I'd like to think God is making us instruments of His will and at the end of the day, we have been given an opportunity to really transform so much of our country and especially the lives of our people," the President said.

"The battle that is looming will not be easy," he said, vowing to fulfill his campaign promise that when he leaves office in 2016, "what we leave is better than what we found."

Later at a women's news forum at Bellevue Hotel, Mr. Aquino said his Christmas wish was for Chief Justice Renato Corona to "revisit the oath that we all in government" made, repeating his earlier calls that the majority magistrates should be loyal to the people and not to Arroyo who appointed them.

The President said he also wished this Christmas that Arroyo, now a Pampanga representative who is under hospital arrest for electoral sabotage, would confess to her wrongdoing.

"Perhaps she can rectify what has been done by helping really achieve the reforms and transformation of society by telling us

PALACE SUPREME | A10

Bishops willing to mediate conflict

By Jocelyn R. Uy

CATHOLIC bishops yesterday said the Church was willing to mediate the conflict between President Aquino and the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Renato Corona.

"The bishops are capable of doing that especially those bishops who have more ascendancy," Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes said over the Church-run Radio Veritas.

The prelates include recently retired Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, incoming Manila Archbishop Luis

BISHOPS | A10

CLOSE ENCOUNTER President Aquino and US Ambassador to the Philippines Harry Thomas greet each other during the Ninoy @ Cory Fellowships held at Manila Peninsula Hotel in Makati City on Tuesday. (DAN ALCANTARA)

SEC: Ongpin probed for insider trade

By Cathy Yamsuan

A LETTER from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) detailed the circumstances that could prove that businessman Roberto "Bobby" Ongpin might have engaged in insider trading when he bought Philex Mining shares, a few days before he sold a big block of Philex shares to tycoon Manuel Pangilinan at an agreed price.

Insider trading happens when someone trades an investment deci-

SEC, ONGPIN | A10

Bad hair day: Barber's killer shot dead in jail

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—The man who hacked a barber to death over an "uneven" haircut last week was killed yesterday morning by the victim's brother right inside the municipal jail in Calinog town, police said.

BAD HAIR | A10

FPJ grandson asks Corona to inhibit self

By Marlon Ramos

NOW COMES a descendant of "Panday."

A grandson of the late actor and an unsuccessful presidential candidate, Fernando Poe Jr., yesterday joined the fray involving Malacañang and the Supreme Court by asking Chief Justice Renato Corona to keep his hands off cases involving former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Rhian Daniel Poe Llamanzares led the filing of one of

PUGANDHOUR, A10

P-Noy ratings remain high in latest poll

THE HIGH approval rating of President Aquino's performance declined only slightly while his trust rating was virtually unchanged, results of a survey that Pulse Asia conducted last month showed.

Pulse Asia said Mr. Aquino registered an approval rating of 72 percent in November, down from 77 percent in the previous quarter. His trust rating stood at 74 percent, a slight decline from 75 percent.

"For the most part, Filipinos' assessment of presidential performance and trustworthiness remains constant between August and November," Pulse Asia yesterday said in a statement. It said the changes were "marginal at best" given the margin of error of +/- 3

P-NOY RATINGS | A11

ENTERTAINMENT
Rhian to Mo: Stop bugging me/ G1

LIFESTYLE
Raising your kids in the time of Facebook / C1

BUSINESS
PH banks to stay healthy in 2012/ B1

WORLD
Russians want end to Putin's rule / A27

NEWS
Another case filed vs GMA: Plunder/A2

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Cloudy and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Eastern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Rest of Mindanao will have cloudy skies with isolated rain showers.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Catarman	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Temperature in Celsius. For Metro Manila: 24°C to 31°C

6/49	
31	7
17	3
1	18

SUPER 6/55: P12,955,824.00

4D	
9	9
1	7
4	7

SUPER LOTTO 6/49: P29,354,367.60

6D LOTTO: 31 17 1 18 9 9 1 1 7 4 7 9

SIX DIGIT: 2 8 5 6 5 7

ENDO MALIGNO KANSER

Another case filed vs GMA: Plunder

By Miko Morales and Norman Bordadora

FORMER President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is now facing two cases after the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) yesterday filed a complaint for plunder against her, her appointees to the PCSO board and two Commission on Audit officials for allegedly funneling money from the agency's confidential fund over a three-year period.

In a 30-page complaint filed in the Office of the Ombudsman, the PCSO also named as respondents former General Manager Rosario Uriarte, former board members Sergio Valencia, Manuel Morato, Raymundo Roquero, Jose Yuvic F. and Ma. Paulina Valdez Romero; COA Chair Reynaldo Villar and Region 9 head Wilda Parras, and PCSO assistant general manager for finance Benigno Aguas.

The respondents "committed... in withdrawing, misusing, or misrouting" public funds worth P891.19 million from July 2007 to January 2010, according to the complaint.

The plunder was purportedly done "by conspiring and/or violating the subject [COA circular] relative... to the liquidation of emplacement PCSO's confidential funds," it said.

An PCSO general manager, Uriarte wrote to then President Arroyo eight times in Great voice a year requesting that she be allowed to draw from the agency's intelligence fund in accordance with rules specified for the allocation of such, the complaint said.

In all, Uriarte drew P310 million from the intelligence fund, the document said, adding that half of the amount was taken on on Jan. 4, 2010, election year.

Uriarte had cited the reasons by which the then president could authorize the release of intelligence funds, and these were:

"to monitor the PCSO's charitable activities and projects; to buy information to determine if the funds were being used for the purposes for which [they] were intended; to fund an investigation of how medicine given to beneficiaries exuded 'Botika ng Bayan' had ended up in unintended markets, and to counter external reasons circulating hate letters and rumors."

President Aquino yesterday confirmed the two cases filed by the government against Arroyo.

The first case was the electoral sabotage complaint filed by the Commission on Elections against Arroyo, former Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan Sr. and former Comelec provincial supervisor Lintang Bedol alleging cheating in the 2007 elections.

Mr. Aquino made the confirmation in the course of answering a question on what his administration's policies would be next year now that the government had filed a case against Arroyo. With a report from Gil Cabacungan

Allies want Gloria home for Christmas

By Gil Cabacungan and Nancy Carvajal

ALLIES of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will ask the court to allow her to spend Christmas at her La Vista home so she could enjoy the holidays with her family, particularly her grandchildren.

Danton Bueser, Danilo Suarez and Pablo Garcia colleagues in the minority bloc with ex-Pasay City Regional Trial Court Judge Jocelyn Alegre to let Arroyo out of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) from Dec. 23 to Jan. 2.

"I think the court should consider our request in the spirit of the holidays. Christmas is a time for the family and, like all Filipinos, she wants to spend it with her son, particularly at home," Suarez said in an interview.

"We are all Christmas anyway," he added.

Suarez said that Arroyo had not been convicted and the judge had already agreed to hospital arrest for the Pampanga representative.

Arroyo was arrested on Nov. 18 on charges of electoral sabotage. She is set to be transferred to the VMMC from St. Luke's Medical Center in Taguig City on Friday.

Suarez said he expects the government to block their request for a holiday break for Arroyo, but he believes the judge will be fair.

Meanwhile, the congressional staff of lawyers is readying the motion of the presidential aunt at the VMMC in preparation for her arrival on Friday, a source told the inquirer. we could be of assistance for lack of audience to speak to the media.

"They are rearranging the room for using the old furniture that was used by former President Joseph Estrada," said the source who was privy to the activity on the matter.

Estrada and his son, now Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, were detained in the same suite for three years while they were being tried on plunder and other charges.

The source also said that the repairs to the bathroom had not started. He added that no additional fixtures or furnishings had been brought to the room.

Australian abducted by suspected Abu Sayyaf gunmen

By Julie Alipala
and Richel Umel
Inquirer Mindanao

DAMBANGA CITY...(Rockwire) were found outside the home of an Australian national who was abducted by gunmen on Monday in Tarragona, Upper Dauja, Sgt. Lambayong Mbagay, police said.

Chief Supt. Felicisimo Khu, chief of the Directorate for Integrated Police Operations (Cipo) in Western Mindanao, said Warren Richard Rockwell, 53, could have struggled with his abductors and was wounded in the scuffle.

Senior Supt. Ruben Carriaga, Lambayong Mbagay police director, said "a witness heard somebody screaming in pain after a shot was heard but it was

in Vinzons so we really don't know if it was Rockwell or one of the armed men." Investigators recovered an empty .45-cal. shell, he added.

Carriaga said Rockwell was ready and alone on her call. "We have the impression his captors had difficulty pinning him down because of his build," he said.

Rockwell, a retired member of the Australian Army, was alone in his home in Green Meadows Subdivision when seven armed men barged in at 6:30 a.m.

Chief Supt. Elpidio de Asis, chief of police in Western Mindanao, said the armed men "tied the victim's hands and withdrew toward the forested area of Barangay Upper Pangi."

But other witnesses said the victim was dragged toward the shore and was forced into a small boat. De Asis said the police were looking at the Abu Sayyaf as possibly being behind the abduction.

Carriaga said this theory was based on a similar incident in which the Abu Sayyaf gunmen were involved.

Rockwell, who hails from Strathfield in New South Wales, has been in the Philippines since May 10.

On June 1, he married Micaflor Garong, 27, of Ipil. The couple owned inn their Green Meadows home in Gendres.

But the couple had not been living together since Nov. 25 when they had a fight, Carriaga said.

Rockwell was the sixth foreign national abducted in Mindanao this year.

In October, gunmen seized three South Koreans in Lanao del Norte as they bolted for dining sites. They were released after more than a month in captivity but one of them, Choi In-Soo, suffered a bleeding stomach ulcer and died on Dec. 2 at a hospital in Cagayan de Oro City.

In Canberra, Australia, Prime Minister Julia Gillard said on Tuesday her government had established a task force to investigate the kidnapping.

"We are certainly aware that an Australian in the Philippines may have been kidnapped. There are media reports to that effect as well. In these circumstances, a task force has been formed to deal with this issue. Our embassy in the Philippines is working with local authorities to try and establish the full facts here. We are providing consular support and assistance to family members of the man who may be involved in these tragic circumstances," Gillard said in a press conference in Canberra. (http://www.pia.gov.au/?press-office/transcript-press-conference-canberra-203. With reports from Bobby Lagsa, Inquirer Mindanao, and Jerome Aning

Manipesto ng Pagsuporta Para sa Tunay na Halal ng mga Imuseño

Kami, mga mamamayan ng makasaysayang bayan ng Imus, lalawigan ng Cavite,
na ginagabayan ng diwa ng pagkakaisa at pakikibaka para sa demokrasya
ng aming mga bayaning ninuno, ay sama-samang naninindigan para sa katarungan
laban sa paglapastangan ng mga indibidwal na may pansariling interes
sa sagrado naming mga boto nitong nakaraang halalan.

Bunsod nito, kami ay naniniwala at pumapanig sa naging pagpapasya ng hukuman,
partikular ang Regional Trial Court, Branch 22, 4th Judicial Region sa Imus, Cavite,
sa inilabas nitong resolusyon noong Ika-16 ng Nobyembre 2011,
sa kasong "Emmanuel L. Maliksi vs. Homer Saquilayan", EPC No. 009-10,
na nagsasaad:

"Wherefore, in view of all the foregoing, this Court finds the Election Protest filed by Emmanuel L. Maliksi meritorious. ***Accordingly, Emmanuel L. Maliksi is hereby DECLARED as the duly elected Mayor of the Municipality of Imus,*** *Province of Cavite after having obtained the highest number of legal votes..."*

Para sa amin, kahit ano pang panlilinlang at pagliligaw sa katotohanan ang gawin
ng mga nagmaniobra ng resulta ng nakaraang eleksyon sa aming bayan,
higit kaming naniniwala na ang bunga ng pakikipaglaban ni Mayor Emmanuel "Manny" Maliksi
ay ang siyang itinamayaning tinig ng mga Imuseño.

Ang tunay na demokrasya sa isang bayan ay masusukat sa pamamagitan ng isang malinis na halalan,
kung saan ang karapatan ng bawat mamamayan, anuman ang katayuan sa buhay, ay pinapahalagahan.
Kailanman, ang isang baluktot na gawain ay hindi magwawagi.

Ang aming panawagan sa mga nagsabwatan,

IGALANG ANG BATAS!
IGALANG ANG TINIG NG NAKAKARAMI!
PAUPUIN ANG TUNAY NA HALAL NG MGA IMUSEÑO!

Various Barangay LGUs
Senior Citizens Federation
Homeowners' Associations
Asosasyon ng mga
Gurong Ina sa Cavite
Transport Groups
KALIPI
Imus Cooperatives
Vendors' Associations
Various NGOs

PAUNAWA:
ITO AY ILAN LAMANG SA
LAGDA NG MGA MAMAMAYAN
NG IMUS NA NAKIKIISA
SA MANIPESTONG ITO.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT BY MALAYONG PAGKAKAISA NG MAKAMAYANG IMUSEÑO

Gov't duns PTIC for P429M

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE OFFICE of the Solicitor General is pressing for plea for the Supreme Court to order the Philippine Telecommunications Investment Corporation (PTIC) to pay the state over P429 million representing additional dividends and interest from shares earlier repossessed in the government.

In a recent pleading, the OSG disputed the arguments of the PTIC, which had opposed the government's motion, saying that these lacked merit.

More garnishes

The PTIC had contended that it was not a party to the case involving the shares, and that as a mere garnishee, or one tasked to simply keep money or property in question, it had already complied with its obligation to preserve the shares for the proper disposition of the court, and to deliver them to none.

The PTIC also argued that the Commission on Audit report on which the OSG based its plea should be the subject of a separate proceeding as that the company could present controverting evidence.

The Supreme Court earlier ordered the repossession of 111,913 PTIC shares registered in the name of Prime Holdings Inc. (PHI) to the government, as well as the immaterial of all dividends declared on the shares and legal interests. The shares were declared ill-gotten and belonging to the the public.

The court's order stemmed from the government's civil case against the late Ramon Cojuangco, his wife Imelda Cojuangco and PHI which sought recovery of the PLDT shares that it said were part of the ill-gotten wealth of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. PTIC, once PLDT's biggest stockholder, owned the shares in the telephone company that were registered in the name of PHI.

Undeclared

After the shares were recovered in the state, an audit found, among others, that the PTIC did not declare all earnings or had understated dividends. Until PLDT shares for several years, depriving the government of additional earnings.

The OSG said the PTIC's argument that it was not bound by the statute since it was not a party to the case was untenable because the Sandiganbayan already ruled on this matter and ordered the PTIC to declare the dividends to the state.

It said PTIC was bound by the execution of the resolution on the repossession of shares since it controlled the declaration of dividends and had already submitted itself to the court's jurisdiction.

P-Noy resigned to Pinoy's fate

By Maritoni Bundalian

IT SEEMS President Aquino is resigned to the fate of the seventeen Filipino worker (OFW) awaiting execution tomorrow in China's death row.

Nonetheless, Mr. Aquino is waiting for his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao's reply to his letter requesting a commutation of the sentence meted on the Filipino migrant worker found guilty of a drug trafficking charge.

"I'm still awaiting a reply from the letter (that I sent) President Hu Jintao but I will have to be realistic given the past that the time that we did appeal to them, we were not able to secure a commutation for those (who) were executed previously," Presidente Aquino said in a news forum yesterday.

President Aquino sent Vice President Jejomar Binay as his special envoy to the Chinese government in asking for relief for the three OFWs that were convicted earlier this year of being convicted of drug trafficking.

The convictions were delayed but were eventually carried out.

"We have communicated the same time and again, to our Chinese counterparts and to their Embassy officials, they answered and replied that there is a serious problem with drugs in their country and this has gone through judicial process," President Aquino said referring to the due process and the continued implementation of the death penalty in China.

Gov't flies kin of doomed drug mule to China

By Jovelyn Belleg

THE PHILIPPINE government has flown to China four family members of a 35-year-old Filipino drug trafficking convict scheduled to be executed tomorrow.

The family members left on board Cebu Pacific Flight 5J 5052 that Binay personally delivered to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3 for transfer to Cebu.

From Cebu, the family members will be brought to Guangzhou, China, where they will board a flight to Guangzhou.

The family members will be met by Philippine consular official in their flight to Guangzhou.

"They will be attended to by our consulate there. A visit has already been scheduled so that they can speak to him," he said.

Request of privacy

Fernandez said the family insisted on their privacy and requested that their flight details be kept confidential. Sources at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, however, said the family members left on board China Southern Airlines flight CZ 5052 that Binay chartered for transfer to Cebu.

"I met them a few moments ago (before their flight) and they are really in a sad situation. They're still hoping that the sentence on their brother will be commuted to life imprisonment," Hernandez said.

From Guangzhou, the family members will be brought to see the convict, who is imprisoned in the city of Dongguan in the municipal Zhuang autonomous region, near the Chinese border of with Vietnam.

On the other hand, Binay, who is the Presidential Adviser on Overseas Filipino Workers Concerns, arrived at the Chinese Embassy in Gemandan Village around 1:05 p.m. and was welcomed by charges d'affaires Hui Tian, who received President Aquino's letter.

"We fully respect the laws of China and we are appealing to you on humanitarian grounds," Binay told Hui.

Binay, in a statement, said he reiterated that the Philippines is "a predominantly Christian nation" and mentioned that Dec. 8 holds "a special significance" to Filipinos as it is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, who was declared principal patroness of the Philippines by Pope Pius XII in September 1942.

He gave the assurance that Aquino's letter "would be immediately delivered to the authorities concerned," Binay said.

In his letter to the Chinese President, Aquino appealed for the commutation of the Filipino's sentence to life imprisonment.

Humanitarian reasons

"For humanitarian reasons, I appeal to Your Excellency to spare the life of (the Filipino), who is now sentenced, and sentenced to death by the Guilin Municipal People's Court," Aquino wrote.

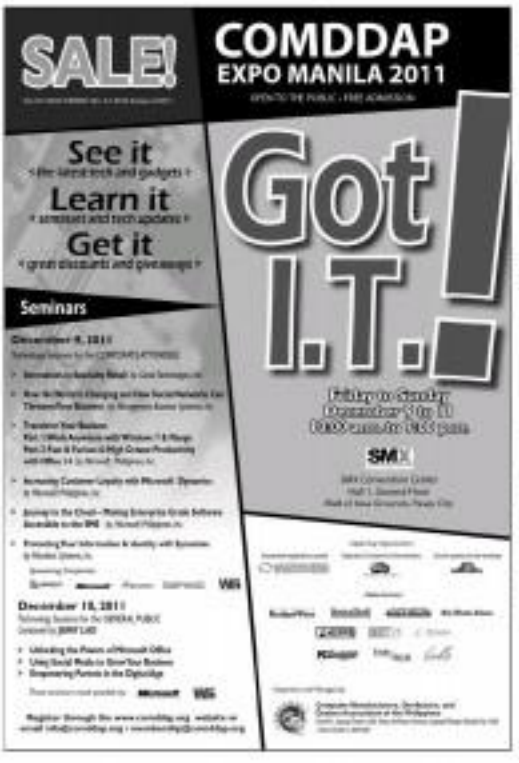
"I wish to stress that my Government fully respects the law of China. However, I am moved by appeals for mercy for the family of [the Filipino,] who is appealing that he be given a second chance to reform himself," he added.

The Filipino, who flew to China from Malaysia, was convicted for smuggling 1,496 kilos of heroin. He was arrested on Sept. 13, 2008 at the Guilin International Airport.

Last month, China's Supreme People's Court affirmed the death sentence on the Filipino, who is to be executed by lethal injection.

In practice, a death convict in China only gets to know the carrying of his sentence on the day of the scheduled execution itself.

Binay was supposed to leave for China to deliver the letter to the Chinese president, but the Chinese government said "it was unable to arrange for visit at this time."



PARKINSON'S DISEASE PATIENT FOR 3 YEARS HEALED IN JUST 8 DAYS BY BOSTON C HERBALS

I have given up my little search of cure for my 3 years Parkinson's disease, because two doctors have told me that there was no known cure yet. Then my wife told me about an herbal drink name Boston C which is known to have cure any kind of diseases even cancer. She, herself has a breast cancer and recession. She ask me help her to visit Boston C's healing center, so I tag along. That's my only motive of going there. I never know that I will stumble upon a miracle that will soon change my outlook in life. My wife undergo on these 20 days treatment. In my curiosity and seeing my wife recovering and talkative again, I tried to drink one of her herbal. Eureka herbs! A transformation which I was reluctant to comprehend started. Before I used to have 2 helpers whenever I wanted to do something but now I can do most of the things alone. I can bathe alone, eat alone, walk alone and my biggest surprise is that after 8 days I was unbelievably jogging all by myself morning and afternoon. Believe it or not my discomforts are completely gone! Singing is my calming I was healed by Cs-05! That's why I want to share this precious blessing I had to all my fellow Parkinson's patient, good news!!! There is a cure for our disease, its Boston C!! Try it now!! Nothing to lose! If I didn't tried it , Parkinson's is still with me!!

See us right now @ Brgy. Malitgan, Tarlac City or call 09209080992, 09209100898 ask for Dr Tess Agudelo or our attending physician Dr. Pamah Acevedo Agudelo@ 09209121284 09178887095 Manila (Metro Manila) 09194851103/09213078437/09178458639 Cebu 09328910744 Davao 09224844911/09213078437/09178458639 Cotabato 09228910744 Iloilo 09178458639/09213078437/09194851103 Bacolod 09178458639/09213078437/09194851103 Mindanao Dr. Nazario 09213146029 Pasco de Fatay Gloryn Bohol 09195738761 Northern Luzon Barbara 09209080992 Our 09213005167, La Union, Pangasinan, Ilocos 09497555555, Manila 09497555555 Visayas, Mindanao Davao 09213146029

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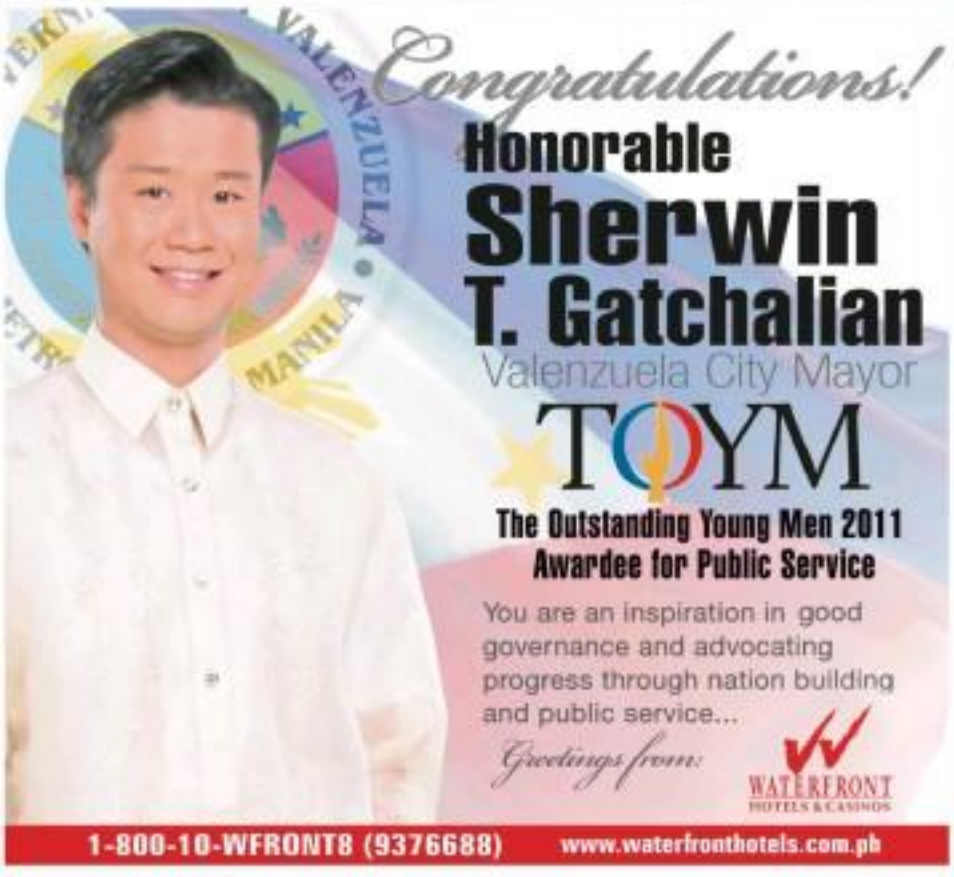

Purisima, Henares take back controversial tax memo

By Gil Cabacungan

FINANCE Secretary Cesar Purisima and Revenue Commissioner Kim Henares blinked first.

Yesterday they bowed to pressure being brought to bear by lawmakers seeking to block a revenue memorandum circular that would force it make it mandatory for taxpayers to disclose any extra income.

Solangon Boy Purisima Mendanas said Purisima and Henares "voluntarily" agreed to recall Memorandum Circular No. 37 2011 due to uncertainty concerning the additional information that would be required of taxpayers would violate their right to privacy.

Henares issued the circular on Nov. 25 to compel individual taxpayers to submit supplemental information detailing their financial transactions—from bank deposits to stock trading to property sales—beginning next year.

Malacañan and Palace agreed to issue a new revenue regulation, in coordination with members of Congress, by the end of the week which would make the filing of additional information optional.

Last year, the BIR issued a similar order (RMC 48-2011) which already required a breakdown of personal, business and other income of taxpayers.

Purisima and Henares had initially resisted calls to junk RMC 37-2011 at the start of yesterday's wave-and-recess committee hearing at the House of Representatives.

But the two settled in the end from the vigorous criticism seized by committee members Magsaysay Guimpalaya of Mindoro's City, Gingoil Aguilos of Isabela, Toby Tiangco of Navotas City, Tomas Apacible of Batangas and Luis Villafuerte of Camarines Sur, who said the BIR order was unconstitutional and violated the Bank Secrecy Law.

Loopholes in cash dole plugged—Dinky

By Germelina Lacorte
Inquirer Mindanao

MANGUIT—The reported loopholes in the distribution of the government's conditional cash transfer (CCT) program uncovered recently by the Commission on Audit (COA) happened in 2010 and have already been addressed, Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman said.

"We've already closed that one, there's nothing left to answer that's why, I was surprised when it came out (in the papers)," said Soliman, who was here for the national consultation workshop with city mayors for the Pantawid Pamilya Program.

"As far as I know, we've already answered this, just to clarify that question about those families who should not be eligible because they're not below the poverty line," she told a press briefing. "We already delisted 6,000 families last year."

Soliman said not only the list was cleared but also the disbursement process with the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Health (DOH).

She said the problem cropped up because the previous administration suspended the implementation of the program three months before the elections. When it resumed, some beneficiaries received lump sum of the amount they used to receive with some receiving the equivalent of six to nine months.

Soliman said that many have answered for the overpayment and the "idle funds" referred to by COA.

"I don't expect to have the same problem this year," she added.

She also said the DSWD has set up a system that not only monitors the compliances of the beneficiaries but also set a time frame for the disbursement and liquidation of papers from the municipal level.

In Manila, House appropriations committee chair Joseph Emilio Abaya—Bayan Muna party would look into the COA report on the CCT. With a report from Gil Cabacungan

POCKET PROJECTOR ANYWHERE, ANYTIME
QUMI Q2
P20,000
vivitek

Still zero for P-Noy on X'mas

By Christine O. Avendaño

UNLESS a miracle happens, President Aquino will remain loveless and out-lives during the Yuletide season.

At the Christmas Party of the Bulong Pulungan forum yesterday at Solid! in Pasay City, Mr. Aquino resorted to humor in fielding questions about his love life.

One journalist tried to ask about the state of President Aquino's love life in a subtle way.

"I will not talk about your love life but I have a question about Cedie, is it still zero?" asked columnist Danny Ramirez, eliciting laughter from the audience.

"Is that the question?" a laughing President said, apparently not clueless as to the real meaning of the query.

"When I check it together," he replied, but added: "The reference to Cedie zero is still the same."

President Aquino had earlier likened his love life to "Cedie zero," in reference to the variant of a soft drink famed then consisting of caffeine.

Aquino told the President she would ask him about his love life but requested Mr. Aquino to talk about grocery lists.

"Somehow, they're interrelated," he said.

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Corrections

IN THE LOC. CARGO, a front-page story..."Edsa Carwerx Pil. ipinas gumiba after Ryad"—received that Eulogio Rafan Rodriguez, who served as the assistant of Epifanio de los Santos at the Philippine Library and Museum, became the Senate president. Nalugio Rafan Rodriguez never became the Senate president. It was Eulogio "Amang" Adena Rodriguez who became the Senate president from 1953 to 1963.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a photo caption on Page A27 misspelled the name of a company headed by Daniel Johannes. The company is Millennium—not Millennicle—Challenge Corp.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a Sunday Lifestyle article on Page E1—"It all started in the 1980s"—misspelled the last name of one of the editors of the book, "Heartbeat Manila Hilloes." The editor is Leny Jurmio-Lopez—not Jacbo-Lopez.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for corrections of factual errors involving the City Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8/F Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Rockwell Drive, Makati City, fax line, 897-[illegible], e-mail address: [illegible]@inquirer.com.ph.

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The Daily Gospel

DECEMBER 7 (Wednesday)
Psalter: Week 2
Ambrose's And Week of Advent
Ps 105: 1-4, 5-6, 8 and 10
O bless the Lord, my soul!
1st Reading: Is 40:25-31

To whom, then, will you liken me,
or make me equal? says the Holy One.
Lift up your eyes on high:
who has created all this?
He has ordered them in solemn host
and called them each by name.
So mighty is his power,
so great his strength,
that not one of them is missing.
How can you say, O Jacob,
how can you complain, O Israel,
that your destiny is hidden from me,
that your right are ignored by [illegible]?
Have you not known? Have you not heard
that [illegible] is everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth?
He does not grow tired or weary,
his knowledge is unfathomable.
He gives strength to the exhausted,
he gives vigor to the wearied.
Youth may grow tired and labor,
young men will stumble and fall,
but those who hope in [illegible]
will renew their strength.
They will soar as with eagle's wings;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not grow weary.

Gospel: Mt 11:28-30

Jesus said to the crowds: "Come to me, all you who work hard and who carry heavy burdens and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest. For my yoke is good and my burden is light."

Reflection:

Today our Savior shows us how kind and gentle he is that he asks us to take our small, dollar tokens. He knows that our journey will be tough and rough but he not only walks with us, he gives us comfort and shares the load. As we know that we are not alone. We are the recipient of God's [illegible] that we can [illegible] our physical trials.

Christian Communication Foundation, Inc., 8 Mapagsi St. UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City (PO Box 4 Diliman) 1101 Quezon City, Tel. No. (02) 433-[illegible], Fax No. (02) 433-[illegible], E-mail: ccf@ccf.org, Website: http://www.christianmissionaries.com (Christian Ambassadors of Jesus Christ) philippine.org.ph/christianmissionaries in the Philippines)

Mikey back from fund-raising trip with $15,000 in pledges

By Ed Cabacungan

SEN. GREGG Mikey Sonny Angara has returned to the Philippines two days ahead of schedule to show, he said, that he was not skirting the tax evasion charges filed against him and his wife.

Angara earned a statement denouncing his fund-raising trip to the United States that he was silent on the fate of his mother, former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who remains in a hospital and is facing election sabotage charges.

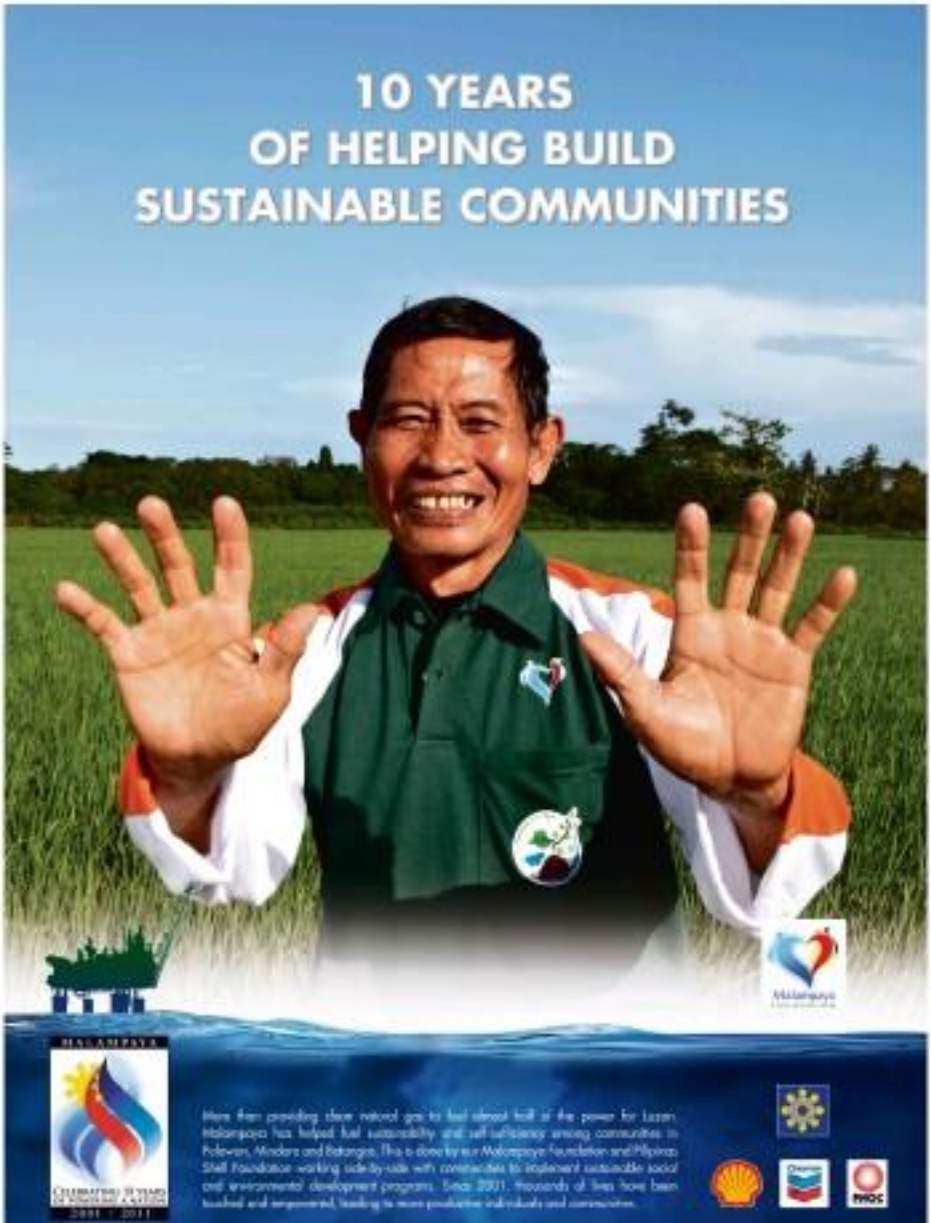
"I decided to cut short my trip to the United States to attend to my mother. I want to prove to everyone, especially the judicial system and to the people, that I am not a flight risk," Angara said.

The former president's elder son was allowed by the court to fly to the United States on Nov. 17. He was scheduled to return on Dec. 7. He went straight to St. Luke's Medical Center at Bonifacio Global City upon his arrival on Monday.

Angara revealed that his trip has been successful as he drew $35,000 in pledges from Filipino groups in the United States to "underwrite his party-list's health assistance for security guards.

"I would have brought home the money but I just don't want to handle it and its disposition," he, what I suggested is that the money go to deposed the way a PDAF (priority development assistance fund) is done," said Angara.

Like a pork barrel fund, Angara said security guards would apply with his office for assistance and their names would be forwarded to the donors who would remit the money either directly or to the hospitals of their choice.



Senators castigate gov't bank execs over $225-M MRT deal

By Christian V. Esguerra

SENATORS yesterday castigated government banking and financial officials over an alleged $225-million overprice in the purchase of shares that allowed the government to gain control of Metro Rail Transit Corp. (MRTC), which builds the mass rail system along Edsa.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, chair of the committees on banks, and former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo could be liable for the questionable transactions, which became possible by virtue of her Executive Order No. 136.

The EO allowed Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and Land Bank of the Philippines to acquire MRTC interests in 2008, using "special purpose vehicles" (SPVs) such as Global Gateway Services (GAS) or Rizalde Yuipco Islands-based shell company allegedly affiliated with businessman Roberto "Bobby" Ongpin.

"This is the first direct link we have where the President really said you get rid of it with the deal. So if we find there has been [corruption], then we can implead her," Osmeña said after his committee's hearing on Ongpin's alleged insider trading involving Philex shares.

Osmeña said he may consider to charge with plunder or violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Law.

Ongpin, who skipped the hearing, earlier denied engaging in insider trading, including any affiliation with GAS.

The problem, according to the senator, was that the government allegedly went beyond the buyout price of $776 million and made the purchase at $1 billion. "It's too much," he said.

Osmeña and the Senate inquiry had yet to determine who benefited from the alleged overprice. He described it "one of the most complicated, complex financial transactions" the acquisition of MRT interests through GAS and Landbank.

"As a matter of fact, if we ask the old directors of DBP and Landbank, maybe only one or two understood what the deal was about. The rest were just rubber stamps," he said.

Osmeña said it was also difficult to pinpoint a particular culprit as of yesterday's hearing because the transactions were done through "three organizations." He said he was not easy to get the books of accounts because these were all foreign corporations.

Focus on GAS

Senator Edgardo Angara urged the senator to focus on GAS, which was formed with a capitalization of only $1 each. DBP and Landbank granted it $1.05 million in syndicated loans in 2008.

Bank officials said GAS got the loan to allow the two government banks to acquire MRTC financial instruments.

The Department Secretary Margarito Teves said the instruments consisted of "unsecured equity rental payments, MRT notes, and preference shares issued by MRT's Funding Corp. Ltd."

"We just lent to GAS for purposes of acquiring the shares," Landbank president Gilda Pico told senators.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile grilled bank officials over the background and nature of GAS, noting that it had no direct board of directors or any other official or structure that would give it a semblance of legitimacy to do business in the Philippines.

"Did they use GAS to hide the payment of profit to the Philippine government?" he said, pointing out that DBP and Landbank might have used the instrument to avoid paying proper taxes.

"I get the impression that there is a special effort to hide the person behind GAS .... Are you telling me that this company did not make any money to this transaction? That was just used as a vehicle?" he told bank officials.

In a hurry

Enrile also questioned the "rush" with which the DBP and Landbank supposedly acquired MRT shares through GAS. He noted that the acquisition was set to get the approval of the Monetary Board on Philippine.

"What was the hurry for us to act on this? Why the hurry to acquire the shares so much so that you had to use a dimly capitalized corporation without any presence in the country," he added.

Teves recalled that the decision to buy out MRTC was based on a "commercial contract agreement" finalized in January 2008. Later on, he said, MRTC became "important that the government's ownership ... memorialized in the MOA." He said it also said "equity buyout access claiming $2.5 billion from the government.

"The acquisition had to be done swiftly primarily because MRTC had already sent notices of acceleration starting Dec. 4, 2006," he said in a presentation during the hearing.

Teves said an arbitration would have led to "a downgrade of the country's credit ratings, payment of interest of the MRT system, and possible payment of claims to MRTC amounting to approximately $2.3 billion whole in arbitration."

The government is heavily subsidizing MRT fares in the wake of more than 97 billion a year, more half a million passengers use MRT 3 daily.

SEC: Ongpin probed for insider trade

From page A1

non to make a profit or avoid a loss based on information that is not available to the general public.

SEC Chair Teresita J. Herbosa told Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile in the Senate on Sept. 14 that Ongpin was still considered "an insider as defined under Section 3.6 of the Securities Regulation Code" despite his resignation as a Philex officer on Dec. 7, 2009, when the sale of Philex shares to Pangilinan at P11 each was finalized.

An SEC investigation showed that Ongpin resigned as director and vice chair of Philex Mining on the same day. He sold 10 million Philex shares to Pangilinan via the Philippine Stock Exchange on Dec. 8, 2009.

Herbosa, however, said Ongpin's resignation from Philex at that point meant "he may have been in possession of material information that is not available to the general public when he purchased Philex shares on Dec. 2, 2009."

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, chair of the Senate committee on banks and financial institutions, said the Senate was very impressed and ceased in establishing insider trading.

FORMER Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves

GILDA E. Pico, president and CEO of Land Bank

PETRON president Eric O. Recto

SEN. SERGIO Osmeña, chair of the Senate committee on banks

GOLDENRIDGE president Ma. Lourdes A. Torres and Goldenrealty lawyer Rodolfo Ma. A. Pantoriano

Fourth hearing

Osmeña's committee and the Senate blue ribbon committee held their fourth joint hearing yesterday on the alleged bribery basis that Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) granted in Ongpin in 2009.

The investigation has now expanded to include insider trading (but Ongpin, allegedly, committed using shares purchased through loans obtained from DBP.

So far, it has been established by the Senate committees that Ongpin sold a total of 100 million Philex mining shares to Pangilinan in 2009. But Pangilinan said in his affidavit dated Oct. 26 that he bought 452,000,000 Philex shares from Ongpin.

Ongpin reportedly obtained two loans from DBP—one for P150 million and another for P130 million.

Ongpin bought 100 million Philex shares for only P12.50 using the P5.00 million loan from the government bank.

Ongpin later acquired Philex shares for P19.25 each that he sold to Pangilinan.

Private agreement

Osmeña recalled that in late December 2009, Ongpin was an officer of Philex Mining when he "entered into a private agreement" with Pangilinan to sell Philex shares at P21 each following a negotiation from Nov. 23 to 27 at Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

"The private deal between the two entrepreneurs came into financial close on Dec. 7, 2009," Osmeña said.

The senator pointed out that Herbosa's letter to Enrile showed that on Dec. 2, 2009, the Ongpin-owned Goldenrealty Corp. bought 49,964,500 Philex shares or P10.25 per share.

According to Osmeña, Ongpin sold the Pangilinan-owned Sur Bloom Holdings Ltd. and signed a share purchase agreement (SPA) that same evening for the block sale of 452,000,100 Philex shares at P21 per share. The transaction cost P9,495,851,500.

Hours before SPA signed

"Ongpin bought millions of Philex shares a few hours before the SPA was signed, and he bought those shares at a price much lower than the price that he himself and Pangilinan was buying Philex shares," Osmeña said.

"The higher Pangilinan acquisition cost [of P21 per share] was known only to Ongpin. This is material information that the public and the investing public are entitled to," the senator said.

Osmeña said Ongpin would be held covered if he continued to insist that he was not involved in insider trading during that episode. "How can he say that he did not engage in insider trading when he traded Philex shares based on information that only he was privy to?" he asked.

The senator said Pangilinan did not announce to the public that he was buying Philex shares at P21 per share.

Herbosa's letter to Enrile supported Osmeña's allegations.

Walter W. Brown

The SEC chair said Ongpin was with Walter W. Brown "together with LBP" when Ongpin signed the SPA with Pangilinan.

"Based on the surveillance report of our Market Regulation Department, ... Ongpin may have committed insider trading relative to his acquisition of Philex shares through tradeconnects ... in violation of Section 27 of the Securities Regulation Code," Herbosa said.

At the same time, Osmeña said he was "disappointed to" Pangilinan for his apparent disinterest in suing Ongpin for failure to return short-swing profit following the sale of Philex shares at a higher price.

Short-swing rule

Under the SEC's short-swing profit rule, a company insider (in this case, Ongpin) is required to return any profit made from the purchase and sale of company stock if both transactions occurred within a six-month period.

A company insider is defined as any officer, director of holder of more than 10 percent of the company's shares.

Osmeña said Pangilinan had until today to file the recovery suit.

Disappointed

"I'm very disappointed in Mr. Pangilinan. The deadline is Friday and he has absolutely not canvassed his fiduciary responsibility to the minority holders of Philex," Osmeña said in an interview after the Senate hearing yesterday.

"Mr. Pangilinan's owns 40 percent of Philex Mining? I feel that the law, specifically Section 23.2 of the Securities Regulation Commission, says he must sue for the disgorgement of short-swing profit," he added.

Very diverse and any stockholder of Philex can now take us court and accuse him of shirking his responsibility," the senator warned.

At least P412M

Osmeña said that from the Philex shares that Ongpin bought from DBP and sold to Pangilinan, Ongpin would have already earned "a minimum of P412 million according to the Commission's own books."

Asked whether he was under the impression that Pangilinan was uninterested in recovering the profits Ongpin enjoyed, Osmeña said, "Yes."

"He's the chief executive officer of many corporations. If this is the way he will keep his minority shareholders to (Manila Electric Co.), Manila Water or (Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.) or Philex, then I think it's a crime," the senator said.

Also answering Osmeña clarified that the affidavit from Pangilinan explaining how the SPA with Ongpin were issued not establish how Ongpin committed insider trading in connection with the sale of Philex shares.

"Nothing in the Pangilinan affidavit gives [Ongpin] down by insider trading. You need the SEC letter [from Herbosa] side by side the Pangilinan affidavit to establish this," Osmeña said.

Bad hair day: Barber's killer shot dead in jail

From page A1

Generating a homemade shotgun, the vengeful brother was able to get near the detained Benito Lozada by pretending to be a friend from his village and offering him haircut, according to the town's police chief, Senior Insp. Aron Palomo.

Lozada was shot in the head in the presence of his mother, who was visiting him at the time, according to another officer.

Palomo was relieved of his post later on Tuesday for unusual lapses under his watch.

The assailant, Nonito Agustin, 43, was apparently out for revenge after Lozada killed his brother, Charlie, with a bolo in the latter's barbershop at the town's public market on Nov. 28. The 48-year-old barber was also a parent of the local Baptist church.

Butt of jokes

Described by police to be mentally disturbed, the 36-year-old Lozada surrendered to authorities immediately after the killing.

He later admitted attacking the barber for giving him a haircut that supposedly made him the butt of jokes at home, investigators earlier said.

A week after the crime, Agustin showed up at around 9 a.m. on Tuesday at the Calbiga police station housing the municipal jail and introduced himself as a friend from Lozada's village.

Agustin first approached and talked to Lozada's mother Cherie, who was then seated just outside the unit's cell, said SPO3 Milo Campos, Calbiga Airport police chief.

Agustin then brought out some biscuits, offering these to Lozada. He later also pulled out a shotgun, Campos added.

Gun undetected

Lozada was rushed to Calbiga District Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. Agustin had since been detained in the same jail.

Palomo said he and 14 other policemen were at the station that morning but no one was able to see Nonito's shotgun when he arrived.

"It happened so fast. I was in my office when I heard the gunshot. I don't think Nonito did it was just an accidental firing," Palomo said.

Chief Supt. Ciprino Querol Jr., Western Visayas police director, said he had ordered the relief of Palomo and an investigation of the lapses on the part of the Calbiga police force.

"Matters should be inspected and access to detention cells should always be restricted," Querol told the bureau in a phone interview.

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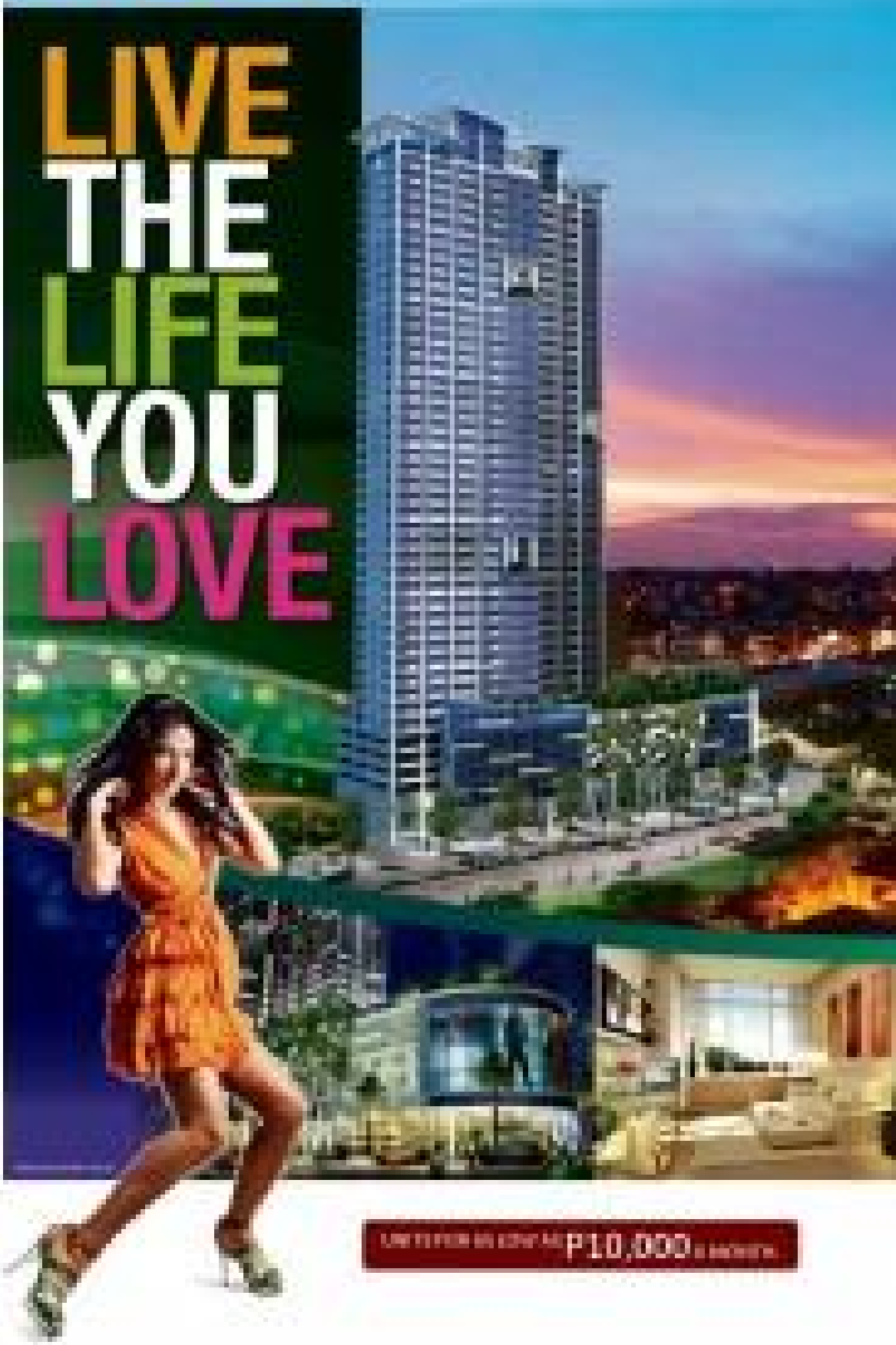

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

New dawn in Burma?

EDITORIAL

WITHIN THE inevitable year-end roundup of the year's most important news developments are events less than a month from now, it will no doubt include the images of two women hugging each other, holding hands, kissing each other's cheek, having dinner together. The Caucasian woman has her hair bundled up in an uncharacteristic ponytail, a far cry from the more, formidable authority she normally projects on her globe-trotting assignments. Letting her hair down (or up in this case) attested to the human sense of camaraderie and warmth she seemed to have generated with the 66-year-old wisp of an Asian woman she was meeting for the first time. There they were, Hillary Rodham Clinton, the first American secretary of state in half a century to be allowed to set foot on Burma, and the Burmese icon of democracy, Aung San Suu Kyi, welcoming her and taking her hand on a stroll through her home and garden that, until recently, had served as her prison.

The images beaming out of Burma these days are startling—and hopeful. Clinton's historic visit to the country by military junta had renamed Myanmar was but the spindliest, most symbolic development in a series of political reforms that have been rippling out of Burma's capital Naypyidaw since November 2010, when a nominally civilian government assumed power and began surprising observers with small but striking steps toward political reform.

It has released Suu Kyi, first of all, after keeping her under house arrest for 15 of the last 21 years. Scores of political prisoners were also released, restrictions on media and freedom of association were relaxed (pictures of Suu Kyi are now openly sold on the streets of Yangon, the country's commercial capital, where before it spelled danger for anyone peddling or buying them), and opposition political parties have been allowed to re-register for planned parliamentary elections, in which Suu Kyi and her once-banned National League of Democracy party have announced they will participate.

Burma's new government under Thein Sein has also taken steps to reintegrate itself with the outside world, inviting consultants from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to take a look at its ramshackle economy and propose reforms. For many decades an international pariah, Burma can bank on China for trade, investments and geo-political patronage. But nancy Chinese actions showed a surprising willingness to back its giant neighbor when it suspended the construction of a hydroelectric dam project, bitterly opposed by many Burmese, that would have diverted 90 percent of its power output to China. And, before Clinton's visit, a flurry of once-unthinkable meetings between Burmese and US officials took place, culminating in the diplomatic coup of two of the world's most recognizable women leaders pledging to work together to bring democracy to a nation long synonymous with political repression, economic backwardness and ruthless xenophobia.

It is a new dawn breaking for Burma? Observers say much remains to be done if these reforms are to take root. Not all political prisoners have been set free—many of them members of ethnic minorities that have been in bloody conflict with the central government for years. Torture and censorship are still in place ("Everything from poetry to films is censored, filtering criticism not only of the government but even bad news, including reports of natural disasters and sometimes even defeats of the national football team," reports the BBC), and Burma remains officially in close relations with North Korea, whose nuclear ambitions and even more secretive ballistic missile procurements have rattled the region. Undercutting its legitimacy, Burma is so technologically backward that as of September 2009, according to Internet World Stats, its Internet users numbered less than 200,000 out of a population of 50.5 million.

Still, for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the US and the rest of the world, this moment appears to be the most opportune time in decades to engage Burma and encourage it to step out of its exclusive, repressive shell. Its long-suffering people would benefit from more international aid, an increase in tourism, and the gradual lifting of international sanctions as fresh reforms and greater freedoms are nudged out of the civilian (but still military-backed) government.

"I believe there are elements within the government who are genuine in their desire to bring about reforms," Suu Kyi has said. "And it is worthwhile to take the risk, to accept that there is a possible opening."

The world should take its cue from her.

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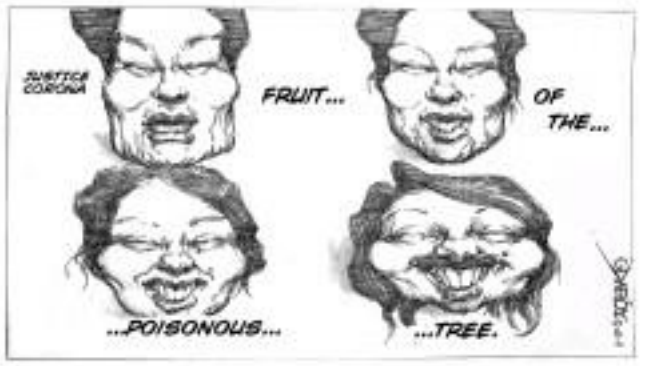


PH has slowest justice system in the world

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

CHIEF JUSTICE Renato Corona was polite, while President Aquino wasn't in that encounter in the Justice Summit at the Manila Hotel last Monday. But who can deny that what the President said in his speech was all true?

Some say that the President's message was right but it was delivered in the wrong place. He should not have done it at the summit where the Chief Justice was sitting only an arm's length away from him, they say. What they mean is that Mr. Aquino should not insult what he said when Corona was not present.

Insult we have a tradition of not saying bad things against somebody who has his back turned? People who do this are considered rotten eggs. "You have something to say, say it in front of me" is the challenge to anybody who criticizes somebody behind his back. Wasn't that what the President did, which was to voice his criticisms before the head of the members of the Supreme Court and the judiciary.

P-Noy had the audience he wanted to hear his message right there. It was a good time to deliver it.

The President did appear rude, but would you rather have him ripples around the subject? That's the trouble with our politicians: Everybody is tiptoeing around them, not wanting to offend the magistrates and the judges, so that they have become so comfortable in what they have been doing.

We have the slowest justice system in the world. Cases take decades to finish. "Justice delayed is justice denied" does not mean anything to them. Even the judges and the Supreme Court which supervises the lower courts are not doing anything significant to hasten the administration of justice.

The unbroken rule is that the high court itself is the slowest in making decisions. It takes decades to make up its mind on cases appealed to it. Indeed, the tribunal is being used by lawyers who want to delay losing cases by filing petitions for certiorari. These petitions should be considered quickly by the high court; sometimes takes years to resolve them, thus delaying resolution of the cases.

"If what members can finish work in a matter of months, why can't we do that?" is the question most often asked by lawmen fed up with the delay in their cases. And the usual answer is that is "Ask the Supreme Court."

I wish the President had also dwelt on the slow wheels of justice, instead of just answering on the "confusing" and "contradictory" decisions of the Court. But I guess he wanted to shock the Chief Justice and the magistrates out of their comfort zones and force them to do some soul-searching.

I also wish that the Justice Summit will produce solutions to the other shortcomings of the justice system. But if the summit can help speed up the wheels of justice, half of the battle would have been won already.

* * *

Why is the Aroyo's camp asking for so many privileges? Now it is asking the Pasay regional trial court to allow her the use of laptops and cell phones while confined at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC).

Everybody should be equal under the law. Rare you, treat a detained former president should be the same as how you would treat a detained ordinary citizen. Already GMA got very special treatment when the court ordered that confined in the presidential suite of the VMMC. The suite was refurbished, the bathroom was overhauled, an automatic bed was provided for GMA, all at taxpayers' expense. Now she wants computers and mobile phones.

When former President Joseph Estrada was confined in the same suite, he was not allowed the use of cell phones and laptops, either. Visitors were required to leave their mobile phones at the guardhouse so that they could not be passed on to him. Why should GMA be treated differently when she is accused of more serious crimes? Drop how all the rules quietly and patiently. The GMA camp does nothing but crap-and-complain endlessly.

* * *

At the Sapphire ss Meals at the Diamond Hotel last Monday, the host guest, Sen. Edu Manzano (the other guest, Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo, was a no-show), chairman of the Senate committee on electoral reforms, said that the biometrics component of the automated election machines should be made an integral part of the system.

The biometrics component takes the picture, fingerprints and signature of the voter when he registers. These records are preserved in the system. When he shows up to vote on election day, these records are supposed to be summoned and displayed on the screen: fingerprint and signature of the voter present. If they are the same, he is allowed to vote. If they don't match, the voter is supposed to be barred from voting. If the voter registered in two or more precincts, he will also show up in the computer records. That means he is a flying voter and won't be allowed to vote.

I said "supposed" because it was not done the last time, according to Pimentel. But there rules should be followed in all future elections, he said. If that is done, at least one of the three methods of cheating—flying voters—would be eliminated. (The other two are vote-buying and threats to voters, which cannot be prevented by biometrics, Pimentel added.)

Pimentel also favors the freezing of all the salaries, allowances, and other emoluments of elective officials against whom election protests have been filed—but only after a recount of the votes in the protested precincts shows that there really was cheating. The losers emoluments will then be given to whoever is finally proclaimed the winner.

"That should free our top cheating," he said.

"Why would you cheat when you won't be able to collect anything until you are declared the winner. If the other guy is proclaimed the winner, he gets the whole pie."

'Abangan ang susunod na kabanata'

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THEIR INDIGNITIES the stuff of stories. Bongbong out of the action upon Erap road to do. Here the melodrama once that featured Sharon Cuneta, or the ones that proliferate on TV today. The ones where the dumb-ass opponents the legitimate daughter has to contend with, including the gung-ago carried out over a long period of time, played with much conviction by the timid ex-pres on Kristoffer — with the oppressed in the end dusting her ass out of the mud (humongous boo-hoo). And watching her opponent is bad.

That's how Erap sees the ways his life has turned. He has postponed the scheduled, or threatened, launching of his autobiography to give room to the latest twist in his story: That twist being Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's arrest some weeks ago. That is his victory. That is his vindication. That brings the curve of his storyline full circle.

"My vindication continues, as we cannot yet claim the book. The ending was supposed to be in the 2010 election, when I got the same number of votes that I got in 1998. That was confirmed vindication for me. It never appealing anymore na kabanata."

It's the stuff of movies of the melodrama variety. Or probably more accurately, it's the stuff of local movies that carry the tagline "it can be life." Which is to say, it's one of those that-to-life fil-ipino movies (there's only one kind) that, even if it makes for a riveting movie plot, it doesn't quite make for a faithful rendition of history.

To begin with, the fight wasn't between Erap and Gloria, it was between Erap and Joseph Ejercito Estrada. And Erap wasn't the oppressed, he was the oppressor. Which was why the reason he got ousted. Clearly, Erap meant to give a mass, a reversal, of Estrada-ness, in that story line. His concept of vindication in fact carries with it a repudiation of Edsa. That is not merely implicit, it is explicit: He is ratching, saying, Erap says, still alive there "Some the cronies and civilian army and the Church conspired against me to bring me down."

That claim, of course, has found more epic performance than a similar claim by the likes of Imee about Ferdinand. But the notion that Edsa 1 was no Edsa at all because it had no people in it, only the elite sent there, is plain wrong. It ignores, as revisionists, one phenomenon that occurred at the time which eclipsed the phenomenon that was Erap himself: Which was the impeachment trial. That was a bigger by-far all of Erap's movies combined. It was an event bigger by-far all of the most popular television series of the time combined, grounding the country in a full each time it grounded on TV. That was what brought the people to Edsa 1. That was what made People Power happen. That was what made it People Power.

In fact, if the people were in any vindication at all, it is a vindication not of Erap but of the people that dismantled that Erap he replaced by the winner of a snap election and not by his Poper Lagman chief among them, whose group loudly called for "Bonjo all!" With good reason. Bloody, because Arroyo was the least deserving of them all: The people ousted Erap not because of his lust (in spite of her. And legally, because Erap did not die or was incapacitated, he was overthrown. People Power is an extraordinary act, why bother to object to ordinary rules of succession?

The one who seized Edsa 2. What made Arroyo's prosecution of Erap look like persecution was not that he was innocent, but that she was guilty. What made Arroyo's pronouncements about Erap sound wrong was not that they were false, but that she had made a habit of lying. Arroyo's arrest does not repudiate Edsa, it merely repudiates Arroyo. Arroyo's arrest does not vindicate Erap, it merely vindicates P-Noy.

Yes, P-Noy because it shows the natural order of things. That is that the best person to bring a tyrant to book is not an even bigger tyrant but a perfectly reasonable one. The best person to say someone for epic corruption is not an even bigger thief, one who has stolen more and apart from, but an equally decent one.

Neither is her son's election a vindication of Erap. Of course, he did very well there, not least because the near universal detestation for Arroyo conferred a natural sympathy for those she oppressed, or was seen as having oppressed. But Erap's enemies of Arroyo ignore, or overlook, one phenomenon that contested there that eclipsed the phenomenon that was Erap's comeback. That was the phenomenon of P-Noy himself.

If last year's election was a vindication of anything, it was a vindication of Edsa. The near-universal detestation of Arroyo did not just confer a natural sympathy to those she was seen to oppress, it conferred a special insistence to those who fought her, to those who were seen as the opposite of her. Edsa was the natural pitch for P-Noy's campaign, however that was lost on his running mates, who had little sense of history and even a fuller sense of the public pulse. I've always ordered to last year's election as an Edsa measuring as an election, and I've meant it in every sense of the term. The people never really seem to an ordinary election, however P-Noy's handlers felt rule that trap too, they saw it as a deliverance from Arroyo. And who better to carry it out than her opposite?

If Erap's vindication is the repudiation of Edsa, then the opposite is just as true. The vindication of Edsa is the repudiation of Erap. All Arroyo's fall from grace shows is that while it takes a thief to catch a thief, it takes an honest man to make sure the thief doesn't get away with it. Maybe there's yet another chapter to follow Gloria's downfall.

Abangan ang susunod na kabanata.

Aquino's killing fields

LAST MONDAY, President Aquino stepped up his attacks on the Supreme Court following a visit last month at the Makati Business Club last Dec. 1. The second attack was marked by viciousness as Mr. Aquino excoriated the head of an independent branch of government, Chief Justice Renato Corona, and humiliated him not for his performance in the Department of Justice, where the President was the keynote speaker.

The forum was the First National Criminal Justice Summit sponsored by the Justice Department, which invited Corona to be one of the two leading speakers. He was lured into a trap...or he straightened.

For the past few months, the public has witnessed an escalating confrontation between the presidency, the most powerful of the three bedrock institutions of the constitutional system, and the Supreme Court, viewers since the founding of the republic. There had been clashes between the Court and the president, but they were not so intense as the current confrontation between Mr. Aquino and a Supreme Court packed with appointees of former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who have prevention for alleged electoral sabotage, graft and corruption during her term.

The simmering dispute came to a head last Monday and earlier on Thursday last week. In the last confrontation at the Manila Hotel, the President attacked the Court with two knockouts, doubting off the civility of the relations between him and the judiciary. He said that he had been "tough in public" because he knew that the President decided to engage the Court in a battle to get public opinion behind his campaign to hold past administration officials accountable for alleged corrupt practices.

In his speech, Mr. Aquino divulged up a number of high court decisions that he said, hampered his effort to prosecute past officials for alleged corruption because the Court had rendered decisions favorable to Arroyo.

Revealing his deep-seated resentment for the Chief

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

Justice, the President treated Corona cool, with resounding sarcasm, delivered to him, in front of the public assembly between no elementary principles of separation of power and constitutional law in interrupting the examples and weaknesses of the current system, life injunctions it is encumbrance to reflect article 8, Section 1 of the Constitution which says, "Sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates therefrom." He said:

"I remind you of this now because there was a point in our history when we were not sure how to do this. During martial law, justice was not directed toward the welfare of the people, but it catered to the whims of a single person, the late President Ferdinand Marcos... My own family was a victim of this. My father was court-martialed, but the verdict had already been set even before the trial was completed.

"With a court made up of magistrates, lawyers, prosecutors, and witnesses all appointed by the accuser, Mr. Marcos, the dictatorship exerted all of force to deny justice and was emphasized now my father's human rights. They took away justice's blindfold, and filled its scales toward their own interests.

"As President of this country, I have a mandate to: 1) preserve and defend its Constitution, execute its laws, do justice to every man, and consecrate myself to the service of the nation. And part of my mandate is ensuring certain that things like period during martial law does not happen again, and ensuring that anyone who so much as attempts to repeat the same offenses is held accountable."

Now that Mr. Aquino is President, he has control of the secretary of justice and the prosecution service. He appoints the judges and exercises the police power of the state. And he is prosecuting lawyers as the central target of his anti-corruption campaign, and is now aggressively pursuing the cases against not just the public servants—the Lilibeth Puno's—but also against lawyers, including judges—acting as jailer, prosecutor and judge in condemning Arroyo, and the Supreme Court before the gallery of public opinion, a gallery in which cohorts of the President in civil society, trained by his campaign, have undertaken their own campaign, rallying for the resignation of Corona, and even the impeachment of the Court.

The President said from the moment he took office, "We have been having the groundwork to get to the bottom of the allegations of corruption against the past administration." He recalled that when he entered the Truth Commission, which was supposed to look into the alleged widespread acts of corruption and to hold those responsible to account, "we had no other purpose for this than to address past wrongdoings as quickly as possible. But we all know what happened: the Supreme Court ruled that the formation of the commission was unconstitutional. From that on, our obstacles had already been put in our path."

He said Arroyo stationed on appointing Corona as Chief Justice a week after the election in contravention of the Court's rulings that the president could not appoint any official two months before the election. "It was because of Corona's appointment when the two appointed Corona in a post that was not in the executive branch but in the judiciary. "The question now is, is the Supreme Court in violation of the Constitution?"

He went on to say superfluously: "I do not have a degree in law, but I've brought up with a clear view of what is right and what is wrong, of what is just, and what is corrupt. I stand firm in my belief that justice cannot be served toward the whims of a magistrate."

Giving P-Noy a break

AT THE Christmas party of the Bishop Palangan-an School, guest of honor President Benigno Aquino was about to be asked by fourth-year Lifestyle editor Thelma Tionan San Juan about updates on his "love life," but apparently he stopped by a pang of conscience, if not conscience now, she wished him about his plans to address poverty instead.

"They're related," the President quipped.

After sharing bits of good news on the anti-poverty front, the President was reminded that he had to speak about the situation. "Sir, you're like poverty," he replied quickly, "it's a not being addressed."

What is being addressed, it seems, is P-Noy's relationships, not with "available" women, but with the Pinoy public. Some scholars he continues to receive high ratings despite the many controversies he's been involved in/involved in.

Last Oct. 31 while visiting his parents' tombs at the Manila Memorial Park, he recalled, an old woman approached him his sister Ilen and then him to give a message. "You don't have to listen to all those people," she told him in Filipino. "Just focus on dedicate! in Filipino. "You just need to listen to us poor people and continue working to help us."

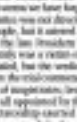
"Wawa ang sei gives enough credit for their intelligence," reflected the President. "And so long as I enjoy their confidence and trust, I will continue to work for their betterment."

It was difficult to believe that a full year had passed since P-Noy graced the last Bishop Palangan-an Christmas party, and if his willingness to keep the crowd once more was any indication, could we hope we could make his presence an annual tradition? In fact, the President was invited to stay behind the fleeting gathering of mostly women to media that he received his "baptism of fire" as a fledgling congressman. In say that he is comfortable with the fishing crowd would be an understatement.

* * *

HE EVEN succumbed, despite his avowed discomfort with the media in general, to undergo a bit of grilling by the fishing "coop group."

Asked what makes him happy these days, P-Noy says it's the confidence he feels that "peoh-



AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

lems personal opportunities." For instance, on the issue of dolorientation, while the country's former secretary of education is disappointed with investing, he said, is using "convergence" to explain poor communities in upland areas for relocation. Families in these areas will be recipients of the "4 Ps" program, which will be conditioned on their involvement in replanting denuded lands. Those families, he said, will also be urged into planting coffee and cacao seedlings, which in turn could also be used to provide income for them.

With the filing of two cases against former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, would P-Noy have new priorities for 2012? "My priorities haven't changed," the President replied. "The economy is still top priority," he said, adding that he was in fact meeting with his economic team that same afternoon and while he had been emphasizing the need to "speed problems by" the administration was now ready to move quickly on such "pump-priming" activities as constructing school buildings and bidding out infrastructure contracts.

* * *

JULIE DAY from the Manila Bulletin asked P-Noy what sense on his Christmas wish list for the following: new flag. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Chief Justice Renato Corona and the MILF.

His message to Arroyo: "You have been given the opportunity to lead this country for nine and a half years. But since you mishandled your responsibility, it's time you answered for it." To the Chief Justice, he continued to "resist the urge to do all this we all seek (especially) those whom we promised to serve."

And on the MILF: "I understand where they're coming from. I remain confident that both they and the government remain serious about the attainment of a just peace."

When Iloilo Ervilla Dendaza, this paper's morning columnist, asked the President about his "dream gig" P-Noy said he would rather quit and DOJ it, at the end his term, before he buys or even thinks about about his "dream car." Perhaps he's been burned by his purchase of a second hand Porsche sports car last year, confessing that he has learned "to live with what I can have."

Finally, asked what he thought about the proposal to change the name of historic avenue Edsa to Cory Aquino Avenue, the President replied wearily: "It's not necessary."

* * *

BEFORE the President's address, the Bishop Palangan-an School community congratulating public officials who had all been guests of the media forum and present their awards.

Recognized as "exemplary" were Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn, Agricultur Secretary Proceso Alcala, Navy chief Vice Adm. Jesus Millan and the leadership of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

The President was likewise granted the Rises and Jacinto Award, for his commitment in "all out justice" and the pursuit of peace instead of violence, as would for was fully deserved, and I told him so.

Indeed, problems continue to engulf our country, and practically all of them land on the lap of the sitting President. It is a heavy enough responsibility facing these problems head-on and searching for solutions. But added to the burdens of high office is the need to be constantly on the defensive and the calumny especially about bringing erring officials to justice and booking all holders of public office, past and present, to the high standards of accountability and transparency that were the linchpin of P-Noy's campaign platform.

The media instant of Malacañang have gone to bat for him at one time or another. Despite this, he now beleaguered President deserves a break now and then, and Christmas is not the time for holding a President's feet to the fire.

Insignificant love letters

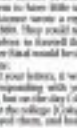
AS 2011 comes to a close, we dote the celebration of Rizal's 150th birth year.

On prime, will come and 2012 will mark the 200th birthday of Mother's Aguina, better known as Teodora Alon, now the name of a bustling Quezon City street. She was born on Jan. 8, 1812, when the Catholic calendar listed the feast of the Three Kings. Many in other sources, who followed a star and found the Christ Child in a manger. They paid homage and presented gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Their names have traditionally been known as Melchor, Gaspar and Balthasar. Melchora's parents could have named her Gaspara or Balthasara, and our textbook history would be different since she was the mother of Jose Rizal, "The Thinking Data." I hope that the celebration of Teodora Alon's bicentennial will become to one the research and survey so that we will know more about women and women's issues as far back as the textbook history chapters on the Philippine Revolution.

Contemplating the names Melchor(a), Gaspar(a) and Balthasar(a) recently brought to mind his passage from Rizal's journal written shortly before he left for Europe in 1882. Sometimes, he here, Unalos, Felipe, Viernes, Benjamin, and others. Other loves will hold you: admirers and soon you will forget the traveler. I'll return, but I'll find myself alone, because those who used to smile at me will be dead or will have forgotten my name, too, and in the meantime I fly after my vanishes, white illusion perhaps.

Everyone knows that Rizal was associated with not one, but two famous Josefas: Josefa Rizal or Josephine Bracken, and Josefa Leonor Rizal or Josephine Cleiren. Josefa, Felipe, Victoria, Benjamin, and the others who used to smile at Rizal? They are not in history and to an inquiring passport like me.

Even Leonor Rivera, his fiancée, who once inspired an ode to the "Morning Star" for the impression that built the Manila-Dagupan Railway, what do we know about her? Very little because she is said to have burned all of Rizal's letters and her own,



LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

too. His is said to have to read all those on the eve of her wedding night, and then she burned them, gathered the ashes and sowed them on the lines of her wedding dress.

That may seem like a classy very romantic thing to do, but if true, whatever love was expressed in those letters was kept from Rizal. Some things are meant to be private and are now lost to history.

A handful of letters from Leonor Rivera have survived because they were to have little significance. On Jan. 5, 1881 Leonor wrote a reply to Rizal's letter of Dec. 30, 1880. They could not see the future: Several decades later, Rizal died on the same date 16 years later Rizal would be shot in Bagumbayan, Leonor wrote:

"If I have not answered your letters, it was not because I am bored corresponding with you. In fact, I sometimes replied to you, but on the way, nobody came to visit me or the village [Caligay de la Concordia], so I destroyed them, and besides I was already embarrassed.

"I am doubtful if the letter is yours, because the signature is different. Perhaps you have just another name, fearing that I might despise it and if I despise it, it will not be your name that will be despised but somebody else's. If that is what you think, you are mistaken for you do not have that power. Only God can punish me for my deep lovers; but you did well in putting another name in case, as you say, it fell into the hands of strangers.

"Command your servant who kisses your hand. Isaias"

One sunday why they were so secretive about their letters and their relationship. Who destroyed the letters and why? Did they destroy because of the same shame felt when a beautiful kiss the hands of strangers? Were they afraid that the letters might fall into the hands of their parents? It is not well known that Rizal and Leonor were related. Depending on the source you are reading or listening to, Leonor was either Rizal's cousin or his aunt. Could this be the reason Leonor's mother insisted in break their engagement?

The other letter dated Dec. 26, 1881 reads:

"Esteemed Jose: I would be glad if on the receipt of this you would write me a few lines.

"I was very much surprised that you had a letter for Papa and wrote for me, but at first when they told me about it I did not believe it, because he did not have a person that you would do such a thing. But later I was convinced that you are like a newly opened rose, very flushed and fragrant at the beginning, but afterwards it begins to wither. Before, however, when I did not write you, you wrote me, but now that I write you, you do not. You have imitated my example when I wrote to Antipolo and you have done wrong, because I was not at my own house, and besides you know very well that you cannot hide any thing from those girls. I write you because I am sick, but I am not sure you might not say anything. I do not, although Mama had ordered me to do so. You cannot have those pretexts because you are at your home and nobody meddles with you. Truly I tell you that I'm very worried for what you have done and for another thing that I'll tell you later when you come.

"Excuse the writing and all the mistakes you find in it. Command to your pleasure your true servant who kisses your hand. Isaias."

These letters are the closest we get to history but they remained so that Rizal was human too.

Comments are welcome in my Facebook fan page.

Charitable harm

ONE OF my graduate students shared a story the other day about how she had given some street urchins a bag of leftover food from a party she had earlier attended. She then went into a church to pray. When she came out, she found her car surrounded by more beggars waiting for more blessings from the car.

I thought I would share more stories of this type in succeeding columns.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

My student was actually encountering not just a group of beggars but an entire underclass culture that grew out of well intentioned charity.

My student knew of the dangers of giving money, and thought the food would be helpful, but that didn't solve the problem of entitlement, mounting the distorted sense of "fair-ness" among beggars.

An expensive blend of wins had a similar problem some years back, when the composition decided to distribute Christmas gifts in one urban poor community near their subdivision. They forgot that there were other poor communities nearby, who did not spend about on getting their share, and came to the event in droves, overwhelming with hunts.

Many schools have Christmas charity drives, asking students to donate old clothes, toys and books. That can be problematic, too, because some of the donated stuff aren't just old but unusual, and worn out. I have heard stories of difficulty in finding recipients for broken toys, worn out pirated medicines, still being included in the donation boxes. Then there are the inappropriate donations like high heels, gowns and suits. Beggars can't be choosers true, but if we are going to give, we should still keep dignity in mind.

Gift packs

Even when schools and organizations try to be more practical, they may still end up with inappropriate gifts. My son's school recently organized an "immersion" day with urban poor children. They sent parents a letter telling us to prepare a standard gift pack consisting of a pencil case with pencils, erasers, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste.

I liked the idea of having standardized gift packs as well as an immersion day where our kids would give out the packs, and so interact with urban poor children. But there was a problem with what they asked us to pack, which was 250 ml of orange juice and a jumbo hot dog. The problem was that these are foods my kids know as special treats, and I didn't feel that the packed orange juice available on the market were water with a bit of orange flavor and lots of sugar. And while I don't forbid hot dogs, I never serve them at home because of its sodium-nitrite content.

Here was was my son being asked to give these things to the poor. I can imagine the indignant children going home and telling their parents to never bother the particular brand of fake orange juice and hot dogs. There was no time for me to express my reservations to the school, but I am suggesting now that next year, parents should just contribute money and the school can get their canteen to prepare healthy food bands.

I do like the idea of interventions and hope the students can explain to the students that there is overwhelming and embarrassing poverty out there, a sense to draw away from their schools, and that that while we give Christmas gifts in the spirit of the season, charity should be a year-round concern.

We need to be looking as well with our kids about the burden of narrow beggars that exists not every Christmas season. When they are younger, it's mainly to remind them that they are fortunate to have a roof over their heads, and food to eat and toys and books and schools. Later, they will have to understand that giving alms does little to address the root causes, including that we tend to consume so much more as the expense of the poor.

I have been teasing my son and asking him if he wants to be renamed "Ishka" or "Rainie" because he keeps asking me to buy more toys for him, and it isn't right that he should have so much, when poor kids have so little. It is heavy stuff for a 6-year-old, but it's a message we have to keep repeating.

Badjao beggars

Lately, too, we have to address the stereotypes of indigenous peoples (IPs) who come around during the holidays to beg. Last Sunday, while driving through Del Bay bridge in Manila, I saw beggars every five meters, mostly elderly and women carrying children. When a woman went to my wife and what I asked, they said they were Badjao. They had been doing this for several years now and I have people in Manila complaining and saying: "It's in their culture to beg. No matter how much you give, they'll never be satisfied."

Yet other Filipinos will remember the same remarks said about the Igorots, the generic term for indigenous peoples from the Cordilleras, because they used to come down to Manila to beg, members. Yes, surely our Igorot beggars were in Manila and we have termed the Badjao and Negritos.

It's not just Manila that has mendicants from indigenous communities. The larger cities in the Visayas and Mindanao also have their share. Davao, for example, has large numbers of Manobuhan.

Our kids have to understand all these groups were once proud people, resisting Spanish and American colonizers. Many were forced to flee to the mountains, or were pushed to the coastlines and Filipino lowlanders, they were pushed further into the hinterlands. While they could, in the past, survive through hunter with lowlanders, the demands of the cash economy today have reduced them to abject poverty.

I refer to the IPs to underscore how a culture of mendicancy can develop within a few years and how hard it is to run be. Ironically, mendicancy thrives because it exploits positive values of giving that exist in our cultures, both in Christianity and Islam, the two strongest religious traditions in the Philippines, charity and alms giving are considered virtues. Sadly, such charity has become distorted, reinforcing feudal relationships, where the poor become indebted to the rich and powerful who dole out alms.

It is time we reexamined these religious values and see how they might be revised and made more useful for our times. Giving should never be unconditional, giving to enabling ways to help people help themselves. Property like Fatima, where homes are build by donors together with the poor themselves giving "sweat equity," are attempts to redefine charity. Instead of encouraging more mendicancy, this Christmas we should be giving to organizations that are building a non-tradition of charity and philanthropy.

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Statistics say people in mining remain poor

LETTERS

IN THE press five weeks ago (many to of the late Palawan libertarian Jaime Ongsiako) I used to make one thing crystal clear. We do not like The foundation of the late Palawan libertarian is truth and the common good. The editor of prof. Antonio Ongsiako spoke for themselves. In mining the incidence of poverty is increasing.

The tables do not say that mining has caused poverty. What the tables indicate is that people involved in the mining sector remain poor (not that their lives are worse off). Many people always in construction, agriculture, manufacturing, but the incidence of poverty in those sectors is being steadily decreasing.

Why is mining the only sector where the incidence of poverty has been progressively increasing for the last 20 years? Doesn't this say something about how the sector is being?

I was confidently say that if poor people are involved in community-based sustainable ecotourism, their lives will improve. I know this from personal experience. Puerto Princesa and Bohol show that tourism is the way to go.

The Siete Pilarean libertarians does not lie. The data is that the highest incidence of poverty is in the mining sector and it has increased by 74 percent since 1988.

Make no footprint of mining is small, to impact goes big for beyond the perimeters of its operations, especially when academic hogger, is it happens often in Palawan alone, there were two mining accidents this year where coral reefs were destroyed. Remember of hundreds disadvantaged, tons of soiled spilled into the sea. Up to now there are thousands of abandoned mined sites that remain uncultivated and the people around them continue to suffer.

When the Chamber of Mines says this mining does not affect agriculture and fishery resources, and I love farmers and fishermen when farm my subsistence who is lying?

When the Chamber of Mines says that mining does not affect tourism, and I have been to islands I can no longer help because there are huge pits that have permanently scarred the island, who is lying?

When the Siete Pilarean libertarians want to save biodiversity in Palawan and wants to eradicate poverty through the use of the environment and mining there who advantages of their poverty to society themselves, who should Palawan be governed best?

The signature campaign of the Siete Pilarean libertarians is genuine. The millions who have signed are people who care. Mineh de Sak. We're asking to Palawan's support on this bid and see for yourself.

—CINA LOPEZ,
Siete Pilarean libertarians

Many different ways to help stop child abuse

LAST NOV. 27, the Inquirer published an article about a teacher facing 25 cases of child abuse after her students complained that she hit them on the head with the back of her shoe. They could not see [illegible] because the tables were in the way.

Child abuse happens when an older person mistreats a child, which leads to the child getting harmed or neglected. Mistreatment can be physical, emotional, sexual or verbal. It can also refer to a parent's failure to provide a child with basic needs.

Child abuse is a serious problem in the Philippines and needs to end. There are many types of child abuse. Physical abuse is when someone hurts a child's body by hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding a child, and sometimes causing death.

Another problem is sexual abuse. When minors are raped, they carry emotional and physical scars for life. They lose faith and trust in people, in government, in their own parents. Signs of sexual abuse in children include having trouble walking or sitting, refusing to participate in any physical activities, inability to control their appetite, nightmares, inappropriate knowledge of sexual activities or trying to act more sexual than usual. Child abuse also affects us when we find out that they are not believed.

Let's all be responsible and [illegible] that decided to address child abuse by forming [illegible] from abuse, child labor, children born from abuse, abuse rights. Inquirer, give abuse 15 children or more 10 or 14 from kids or domestic servants and give them under the foundation's 10 to 12 month residential program, which includes training in education, therapy, sports and arts classes. It helps children discover their talents and what they want to be when they grow up. It also teaches kids certain values so that they can move on.

Anyway currently has a campaign, called "Break The Silence," which makes videos and interviews about sexual abuse for grades to audiences. Someone believes that child abuse is not likely to happen when there is more awareness.

What can we do to stop child abuse? We can call the police when we see signs of it. We should listen if a child says he or she feels neglected or abused. And we can educate others about child abuse.

Read our Yuletide's wish, and we [illegible] www.pinoyexchange.com/forum/showthread.php?t=[illegible] or contact them at info@childprotection.org.

—CHRISTOPHER DANIEL MANALAC, EDRALIN DANIEL PUNO, International School Manila

MANILA WATER SERVICE UPGRADE IN PASIG

East Zone customers residing in the following areas in Pasig City will briefly experience water service interruption when the Company conducts pipelaying along Ellacs Road, Kalawaan.

The interruption will occur during the following schedule:

Schedule : **10.00 PM, Thursday, December 8, 2011 up to 6.00 AM, Friday, December 9, 2011**

Affected areas : **Barangay Kalawaan**

Manila Water Company is advising all residents of the said areas to store enough water to supply their needs during the interruption period.

We want to serve you better.

These service improvement projects are necessary to ensure safe and reliable water supply for our East Zone customers.

For updates, please call our Customer Care Hotline 1627

Manila Water

Securing the Future Today

VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Section 1, Article VII of the Amended By-Laws of the Corporation, the Annual Stockholders' Meeting of **VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC.** ("VMC") will be held on **Tuesday, 07 February 2012** at 9 o'clock a.m. at the Kadena Room, Century Park Hotel, 599-F, Ocampo Street, 1004 Manila, Manila.

The **AGENDA** will be as follows:

1. Call to Order.
2. Certification of Notice to Stockholders and Presence of Quorum.
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Stockholders' Meeting held on 01 February 2011.
4. Presentation of the Annual Report.
5. Ratification of Acts and Proceedings of the Board of Directors and Corporate Officers.
6. Appointment of External Auditors.
7. Election of Members of the Board of Directors.
8. Approval of the Amendment of Second Article of the Articles of Incorporation, particularly the First, Fourth, Fifth and Eighth Secondary Purposes.
9. Ratification of the Corporation's Authority to Invest Corporate Funds for Purposes Other than Its Primary Purpose pursuant to the Extended Amendment of the Second Article of the Articles of Incorporation, subject to approval by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) of such Amendment.
10. Increase in the Corporation's Authorized Capital Stock of Two Billion Five Hundred Sixty Three Million Thirty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Eight Pesos (₱2,563,035,708.00) divided into Two Billion Five Hundred Sixty Three Million Thirty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Eight (2,563,035,708) shares with a par value of One Peso (₱1.00) per share to Five Billion Four Million Nine Hundred Six Thousand One Hundred Eighty Two Pesos (₱5,004,906,182.00) divided into Four Billion Four Million Nine Hundred Six Thousand One Hundred Eighty Two (4,004,906,182) shares with par value of One Peso (₱1.00) per share and Amendment of Seventh Article of the Articles of Incorporation to effect the same.
11. Other Matters.
12. Adjournment.

Minutes of the said Regular Stockholders' Meeting and resolutions of the Board of Directors from 01 January 2011 will be available for examination during office hours at the VMC Manila Office located at 348 J. Hagonoy Street, San Miguel District, Manila.

Stockholders who will not, are unable to, or do not expect to attend the meeting in person may, at their option, designate their authorized representatives by means of a PROXY which should be submitted to **Ms. Glenna B. Acosta** at the VMC Manila Office, located at 348 J. Hagonoy Street, San Miguel District, Manila, **Atty. Eva A. Vicencio-Rodriguez** at VICMICO Compound, Binalbagan City, Negros Occidental or **Fidelity Stock Transfers, Inc.** at G-12000 East Tower PSE Centre, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City **not later than 20 January 2012 at 5 o'clock p.m.**

Only Stockholders of Record as of 5 o'clock p.m. of 16 January 2012 shall be entitled to vote at this meeting.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CORPORATION IS NOT SOLICITING PROXIES.

With respect to the nominations and elections of all directors, you submit to Section 4, Article VII and Section 6, Article VIII of the Amended By-Laws, stockholders must submit their nominations to the Nominations, Remuneration & Compensation Committee and/or the Corporate Secretary at the following addresses not later than 5 o'clock p.m. of **13 December 2011.**

NOMINATIONS, REMUNERATION & COMPENSATION COMMITTEE
VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC.
348 J. Hagonoy Street
San Miguel District, Manila

ATTY. SAMSAGOD T. GABIONDA, JR.
Corporate Secretary
VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC.
c/o 20/F CBN Corporate Center
139 Valero Street, Salcedo Village
Makati City

All nominations should include (i) signature of the nominating stockholder, (ii) acceptance and conformity of the nominee, (iii) curriculum vitae of the nominee, and a statement that the nominee has all the qualifications and none of the disqualifications as set forth in the Corporation's Manual on Corporate Governance, Section 38 of the Securities Regulations Code ("SRC"), Rule 38 of the SRC, the SEC Memorandum Circular No. 2, Series of 2002 dated 02 April 2002, and the SEC Memorandum Circular No. 24 dated 26 September 2002, (iv) information on the relationship of the nominee to the nominator submitting the nomination, and (v) all relevant information about the nominee's qualification.

For your convenience in registering your attendance, please present any form of identification, such as driver's license, passport, voter's I.D., Social Security System Number card or Tax Identification Number Card. Your duly designated proxy is required to present a copy of the duly-executed proxy form. Registration will start at 7 o'clock a.m. and will close at exactly 9 o'clock a.m.

Please be guided accordingly.

SAMSAGOD T. GABIONDA, JR.
Corporate Secretary

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CEBU DAILY NEWS

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

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Editor: Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief/Rolando B. Fernandez

One of Baguio's '3 Witches' is gone

By Maurice Malanes
Baguio City

SHE MADE history and earned the distinction of being the country's first woman chemical engineer. But Leonora Paraan San Agustin would be remembered by a Baguio community which she loved so much, that she wouldn't tolerate what she called its "suffocation."

And she was not only referring to some officials' penchant for allowing concrete to swallow the city's open green spaces; she was also referring to the degradation of the souls of those in charge of local government.

At one point, San Agustin, former Baguio Mayor Virginia de Guia and Baguio Midland Courier editor Cecile Afable-Jungwon were among the three witches" who would protest city officials in dirge-accented chants to protest what they said was the capital's rampant environment.

Still, for the three elders, "It did not matter if they were the last persons standing," wrote Stella Maris de Guia in a recent Midland Courier editorial. "What mattered most," she said, "was their love for Baguio—to keep its beauty and antiquity, to prevent its concretization, and the community and government officials into action."

San Agustin succumbed to liver cancer on May 30, a month after she was diagnosed of the disease while on vacation in her daughter's house in Davao. She was 96.

Born to poor parents from Pangasinan, San Agustin practically worked her way through school. She earned extra money washing other people's clothes, but this did not prevent her from graduating valedictorian in elementary and high school.

A scholarship enabled her to pursue a chemical engineering course at Adamson University in Manila and graduated cum laude. She passed the board exams and became the first woman chemical engineer in the country in 1939.

She did not pursue a career in chemical engineering though, after she found that she was allergic to chemicals.

After World War II, San Agustin shifted to teaching Humanities at Baguio College Foundation (now University of the Cordilleras) until she retired in the 1960s. From retirement, she rose to become full professor and head of the school's public information and alumni relations office.

Her students would not forget how she hammered into their heads the pursuit of excellence. She abhorred what she described as the "DR fang" attitude of many of them or how they were satisfied with mediocre class performances, even scolding and calling them "fakeyng" (roughly translated as cheats).

But calling the students names was actually an ironclad to demonstrate. Then now appreciate that hard-earned grades would be their ticket to better options.

Many of them followed their way in government. San Agustin would work with them later when, after retiring from the academe, she became the curator of the Baguio Museum's Provincial Museum in 2000.

San Agustin integrated the museum with the city's educational system. She made sure that the Cordillera's diversified culture would help reinforce classroom instruction through the museum's monthly exhibits.

Like other seniorens, the museum was damaged after a 7.8-magnitude earthquake devastated the city in 1990. But she strong-willed San Agustin initiated the facility's reconstruction, soliciting funds from government officials and other donors.

"The building she was able to solicit from the government was used to the last centavo, owing to her compulsion to insulate its construction even to the point of relocating walls that have fallen to the ground," wrote J. Fred Mercantile in the Philippine Yearbook 2005 that the Bookfest Times published).

"That's why those who want to commit graft didn't like me," Miss cordillo-quoted San Agustin as saying in Filipino. "They have nothing to take from me at MuMuseo."

Lorie Ann Fernandez, San Agustin's daughter, summed up the life of the most important figures from her mother—"longevity and social graces."

"WITCHES": This trio of senior citizens, who call themselves "Three Witches," lost a valuable partner: the late Leonora San Agustin (right) (seated) former Baguio Mayor Virginia de Guia (left) and veteran journalist Cecile Afable-Jungwon (standing) are carrying on with their Baguio environmental crusade. (LEONORA SAN AGUSTIN)

IN MEMORIAM

What have we done to our city?

Excerpts from Leonora San Agustin's column that appeared in the 60th anniversary supplement of the Baguio Midland Courier in 2007.

OUR CITY, the once beautiful mountain village surrounded by sun-kissed clouds and blessed with the abundance of rain-drops dancing in the light of the afternoons, is going—if not gone!

The city, where I felt the re-touching coolness of the late night dank while watching the glorious sunset slowly disappear from the mountains' violet and hazy gray line, is not there anymore.

The city, which I called me to sleep with the secure sense that tomorrow the flowers will bloom again and the sweet summer scent of the pine trees will waft again, is creeping into the dim and dark of daily hankering in the late afternoon rush-hours and buses roaring stridently against the shadow of the ugly, high-rise buildings, which deepen the gloom of our city streets with their huge, atrocious billboards.

Yes, those city streets, where as a child and as a teenager I roamed familiar corners without fear, are now filled with wheedlers and aggravate who dirty the sidewalks, urinate on the canals, and splash graffiti against every blank space they encounter.

Yes, that city, which was once the Mecca of tourists, kind and merry people, and romantic lovers who come for rest in the cool-conducing weather, is now the center of dubious cafés, basement-sight spots, drunk people, sleeping police patrols and teenagers out for thrill and no permanence.

Where are you going, my beloved city—progress or decadent stress? No more, my friends! My passes of beauty of peace and quiet, of faith in City Hall, and sometimes even of faith in my fellowmen—the "bago-Bagios" of which I was very proud of are no more! Where have all those that we treasure gone?

Gone were the little grass and white low cottages where I first went to school. Gone are the two rhapsodies of Arneo Ca and the Philippines on top of what was then Lunetta Hill. Gone are the pine trees around the school grounds, gone is the many-go-round that made me sick when Jimmy Hellenius and Bebe de Guia would whirl it so fast that I had to jump out on the green grass because of dizziness. Gone also are the American teachers who taught us not only English and arithmetic but also good manners and right conduct. Gone is the focus of our dreams and the focus of our minds!

UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST
Philippines

13th Midyear Commencement Rites

UE MANILA & UE CALOOCAN

Graduate School • Colleges of Arts and Sciences •
Colleges of Business Administration • College of Computer Studies and Systems •
College of Education • Colleges of Engineering • College of Fine Arts

Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Humanities (Honoris Causa) upon

MR. ANDREW L. TAN

UE BSBA '74 (Magna Cum Laude)
Chairman and President, Megaworld Corporation

December 8, 2011 • 2 p.m.
Plenary Hall, Philippine International Convention Center
CCP Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

The UE College of Dentistry held its Midyear Commencement Rites last November 24, 2011 at the UE Conference Hall.

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Assistant Editor Tony Regalado

Across the NATION

Gov't rejects 131 mine applications

Companies didn't have prior community consent

DAVAO CITY—The government has rejected at least 131 mining applications since November mainly because of the applicants' failure to acquire prior consent from communities where the mining operations will be located, according to a ranking mining official.

Among the rejected applications were those for mineral production sharing agreements, exploration permits and financial and technical assistance agreements, according to Wilfredo Moncado, acting director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Moncado did not identify the companies whose applications were rejected or the specific areas where they wanted to conduct mining.

He said, however, that the main reason for the application rejection was the failure of the applicants to secure the prior consent of indigenous communities where they planned to conduct mining.

Consent from indigenous communities should come in the form of certifications from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, the government body overseeing matters of indigenous communities.

The rejected mining applications also failed to secure proof of consultations with local government units that had jurisdiction over the areas where they wanted to mine, Moncado said.

"It does on the part of the applicants to comply with one of the requirements (that) is ground for the denial of the mining permit based on the order given by then-interior secretary Ramon Paje," Moncado told reporters last Monday.

Of the 131 mining applications, Moncado said only 73 filed motions for reconsideration (MR).

"For those who did not file an MR, their applications will automatically be removed from the MGB list," he said.

As with development, Moncado said 98GR Southern Mindanao has forwarded to the MGB central office some 27 mining applications for approval.

"Most of the 27 applications—involving local mining investors—have reportedly complied with all the necessary requirements," he said.

Moncado said the 27 mining applications were for areas in Compostela Valley province.

The provincial government of Compostela Valley last month said it was working with the MGB to relocate families living in dangerous areas in the gold rush area of Mt. Diwalwal in Monkayo town.

Compostela Valley Rep. Marlene Esmero-Apuay said families living in danger zones in the gold rush area are exposed to diseases associated with small-scale mining, like leptospirosis.

BIMB agreed to the relocation plan, allotting an initial P100 million to move families away from high-risk areas and other related projects by the Compostela Valley government, Apuay said.

The legislator said relocating families, however, was just a short-term solution to the lack of safe mining practices in Mt. Diwalwal, Andy Quitaro, Inquirer Mindanao

GREEN SNOWMAN
It's the only one of its kind in the country — anywhere like this one in Calapan City in Oriental Mindoro. It is up with solar bulbs which are simply discarded plastic soda bottles containing water and a solution to capture light from the sun and keep them aglow. INQUIRER VISAYAS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Experts see more forest destruction through farms

BAGUIO CITY—Farmers are likely to ignore the risks of further encroaching into upland forests because climate change is forcing them to, according to experts.

Edwino Fernando, a forest botanist of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), and Roberto Gozun, deputy director of the Modeling Center for Materials Environment, explained this scenario with officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) last week.

Reynold Fortun, Cordillera regional technical director of the Protected Areas Wildlife and Coastal Zone Management Section, said DENR and Department of Agriculture (DA) had been trying to stop the further expansion of farms in forests.

DA invented ito organically grown indigenous rice for upland farms because these areas are now over-logged, said Dante Delfino, coordinator of DA's national rice program.

Many of these farms, however, thrive because they have become sources of vegetables for highland markets like those in Metro Manila. Many have displaced pine forests in Benguet and Mt. Province starting in the 1980s when with the help of government roads that Ferdinand Marcos described as "arteries of destruction."

Since 2009, typhoons have dumped bigger volumes of rainfall on the Cordillera, triggering erosion that destroyed upland farms.

But the impact of extreme climate change is an increase in temperature, "so upland farmers would need to penetrate more among forests to grow temperate vegetables," Gozun said.

In their book, "Biodiversity and Natural Resource Conservation in Protected Areas of Benguet and the Philippines," the UPLB experts said the growing demand for vegetables and timid law enforcement have encouraged more clearing and burning of more forests and (their) conversion into farms on a commercial scale." Howard CERVEN, Inquirer Northern Luzon

NEWSBRIEFS

BACOLOD CITY

Negros-Korea flights

THERE would be direct flights from the Bacolod International Airport in Silay City to Incheon in the province and Busan, Korea, in the Bacolod-Silay Airport in Silay City due to increase in economy and February next year, Silay Mayor Jose Mondelabaro said Monday.

Mondelabaro said he hoped the flights from Korea will have a boost to tourism in the province and lead to the opening of direct flights to Japan and the rest of Asia in Negros Occidental.

Timothy Jones Gaisano, Zest Air Bacolod station manager, said there would be additional flights of Zest Air Phils. effective Jan. 3 to Feb. 27, 2012 including flights from Bacolod to Incheon and vice versa.

At the Bacolod-Silay Airport, chartered flights from Korea and back will be available every Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, according to airport manager Jun Madarcos. *Carlos P. Conde, Inquirer Visayas*

CAGAYAN CITY

Holiday truce urged

A "TRIBAL truce in Xavier Ulayan appealed to the soldiers and communist rebels to respect hostilities for the holidays following a military statement suspending willingness in half offensives against the rebels during this period.

Ramon Rebonza, executive director of the Tribal Justice for Development Foundation, Inc. based in Misamis Oriental, said in a phone interview Monday that the New People's Army declared suspending of the International Day of the Philippines, should respect suspension by soldiers.

Bobby Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Flood-hit Bulacan schools get help from Canada

GUIMBAY, Bulacan—Children in flood-hit public elementary schools here and in Hagonoy town received new school bags, notebooks and other school materials as part of a drive by the Canadian government and other donors to help in the cleanup and recovery of communities ravaged by widespread flooding and typhoons.

Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines Christopher Thornley and Elaine Bolton Associates, executive director of the World Vision Development Foundation (WVDF), led the distribution of bags filled with notebooks, pencils, crayons and other school materials to 640 pupils at the San Jose Elementary School here on Monday.

Ambassador said the gifts were part of the 16-million-Canadian-dollar initiative of the Canadian government to provinces in Cagayan Valley, the Cordillera and Central Luzon that were hit by recent calamities.

Through the WVDF, Bulacan towns submerged by floods in September were given P2 million worth of assistance for the cleanup and repair of schools, including the replenishment of school materials.

Leonilo Bautista, San Jose Elementary School principal, said some 2,500 residents in different villages here and in Hagonoy were tapped for a food-for-work program during the cleanup drive and rehabilitation operations for seven days a week.

Mayor Aurea de Jesus said the program eased the economic problems on where to get food after the floods subsided.

Thornley said the Canadian government is proud of the assistance shown by residents of Calumpit and Hagonoy to survivors and the floods.

He encouraged them to continue to have a positive outlook in life, especially during calamities. *Carmelo Reyes-Estrella, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Group keeps alive and running jeeps that helped win war

By Jun Pluma
Inquirer Central Luzon

CLARK FREEPORT—Before the Hummer, there was the willys. Any car reliable hero-turned-hero vehicle during World War II.

Dubbed as "the American workhorse of World War II," hundreds of Willys Jeeps were armed with guns, threats and machine guns, similar to those used by actors in the TV series "The Rat Patrol" in the 1960s and 1970s.

Last week, 35 of these old vehicles found their way into this former US military base. Their owners are not their average jeep collectors or history buffs or both.

Herbert Concepcion, 47, a resident of Angeles City and member of the Willys Jeeps restoring those at the event.

Concepcion, a member of the Military Vehicle Collectors Club of the Philippines (MVCCP), is Pampanga's proud of his blood of MB Jeep, which was built by Willys-Overland Motors in its Ohio plant in 1942.

"I bought it from a man in Mexico, Pampanga, after the Mt. Pinatubo eruption in 1991. I spent around P300,000 to restore it in four years. It is known as the 1942 MB, which we call the Blackwidow Jeep in the Philippines," he said.

The MVCCP Pampanga chapter was started by five people around a decade ago and now has 25 members, said Concepcion.

"Each member owns at least one jeep. We added them because they have historical value and they are beautiful," he said.

The gathering of "jeepers" was initiated by vehicle restorer and collector MD Anne Enterprises in cooperation with MVCCP and the Bataan Provincial Government to give the gathering a different venue.

Guy Hilbero, Mobilization tractions officer, said the event remembered the Battle of Bataan to give the gathering a different venue.

"We have decided to remember the Battle of Bataan to give historical color to the gathering because members of the MVCCP are not just collectors; they also have a sense of history and they know very well the good contributions of their jeeps in winning the war for the Americans and the allied forces," Hilbero said.

MVCCP has chapters in the Bicol, Bicol Region, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Metro Manila.

The Willys Jeep is also the predecessor of the "owner-type jeep" and the "Jeepney," the product of ingenious Filipinos who turned surplus and scrap materials into what is now known as the king of Philippine roads.

FLAMANTE Concepcion, wearing a khaki Philippine scout uniform, with his 1942 Model MB Willys jeep
JUN PLUMA/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

P-Noy ratings remain high in latest poll

From page A1

percentage points.

But Pulse Asia said "disenchantment with the Aquino administration's performance on selected national issues became more pronounced," with the biggest increase in disapproval of how it addresses poverty.

Disapproval of its efforts at "reducing the poverty of many Filipinos" went up 13 percentage points from 23 percent in May to 36 percent in November.

The number of poor people has increased despite economic growth over the past decade, indicating that the fruits of expansion are not trickling down to the poor.

Not surprisingly, the approval rating of the President dropped by 13 points among Class E (the poorest of the poor) from 88 percent in August to 75 percent. It declined in Class D (the poor) from 74 percent to 71 percent and Class ABC (those the poorest in 65 percent).

PERFORMANCE RATINGS OF PRESIDENT AQUINO
Nov. 10 - 23 (in percent)

Performance ratings	Approve	Undecided	Disapprove
Philippines	72	19	9
Location			
NCR	64	25	10
Luzon outside Metro Manila	70	20	10
Visayas	82	12	6
Mindanao	71	19	11
Socioeconomic class			
Class ABC	65	24	11
Class D	71	19	10
Class E	75	17	8

SOURCE: PULSE ASIA

TRUST RATINGS OF PRESIDENT AQUINO
Nov. 19 - 23 (in percent)

Trust ratings	Big trust	Undecided	Small/No trust
Philippines	74	17	9
Location			
NCR	69	20	11
Luzon outside Metro Manila	71	19	10
Visayas	87	9	5
Mindanao	70	20	10
Socioeconomic class			
Class ABC	66	26	8
Class D	73	18	9
Class E	76	15	8

SOURCE: PULSE ASIA

Population growth

The government's efforts at "controlling the population growth" also earned a double-digit increase in the disapproval rate—up 11 percentage points from 14 percent in May to 25 percent in November.

The government is pushing for a reproductive health bill, which seeks to provide couples access to family planning methods, but the measure is strongly opposed by the Catholic Church.

Pulse Asia conducted the survey from Nov. 10 to 23, it was not clear if it was before the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order on the measure.

Arroyo's arrest

The survey also coincided with reports arrest on Nov. 18 on charges of electoral sabotage, a humiliating offense, to former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo from leaving the country despite the Supreme Court's issuance of a temporary restraining order on the watchlist order against her.

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Pulse Asia conducted the survey from Nov. 10 to 23, it was not clear if it was before the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order on the watchlist order against her.

Mr. Aquino maintained majority approval ratings in all geographic areas (ranging from 64 percent to 82 percent) and socioeconomic classes (ranging from 65 percent to 75 percent).

He also maintained majority trust ratings in all geographic areas (between 69 percent and 87 percent) and socioeconomic classes (66 percent to 76 percent).

The percentage of those who disapproved of Aquino's performance increased from 4 percent in August to 9 percent in November.

Distrust

Nineteen percent were undecided whether they approved or disapproved of his performance, up from 16 percent in the previous quarter.

The survey found that those who expressed distrust in the President increased from 5 percent in August to 9 percent in November.

Those who were undecided whether they trust or distrust Mr. Aquino increased from 19 percent to 17 percent over the same period.

Except in the Visayas, where Mr. Aquino gained 2 percentage points to his approval rating (from 80 percent in August to 82 percent in November), the President posted declines in Mindanao (from 81 percent to 71 percent), Metro Manila (from 73 percent to 64 percent) and Luzon outside Metro Manila (from 76 percent to 70 percent).

His trust rating rose 13 points in the Visayas, from 74 percent in August to 87 percent in November.

It dropped 12 percentage points in Mindanao, from 82 percent in August to 70 percent in November. It also declined in Metro Manila (from 74 percent to 69 percent) and Luzon outside Metro Manila (from 73 percent to 71 percent).

The President's trust rating increased among Class ABC (from 64 percent in August to 66 percent in November), but declined among Class E (from 82 percent to 76 percent) and Class D (from 74 percent to 73 percent).

Indecision

Among those who were undecided on Mr. Aquino's trust/distrust, Pulse Asia noted a 10-point decrease in the Visayas, from 23 percent in August to 9 percent in November.

Indecision on Mr. Aquino's trustworthiness increased in Mindanao by 7 points, from 13 percent to 20 percent.

In the survey, respondents were also made to express approval, disapproval or indecision on the President's performance on selected national concerns.

Mr. Aquino's administration gained majority approval ratings for curbing graft and corruption (58 percent, unchanged from the May figure). Fighting criminality (53 percent) and law enforcement (52 percent).

Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research

New planet with mall-like climate found

From page A1

mall-like surface temperatures of near 22 degrees Celsius, scientists say.

The planet's confirmation was announced on Monday by National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) along with other discoveries by its Kepler telescope, which was launched on a planet-hunting mission in 2009.

"It's a great gift," said chief Kepler scientist William Borucki. "We consider this part of our Christmas present."

It is the first planet confirmed in the habitable zone for Kepler, which already had found Earth-like rocky planets elsewhere. Some European astronomers have announced a planet found in that zone, but neither has been as promising.

"This is a phenomenal discovery in the course of human history," Geoff Marcy of University of California, Berkeley, one of the pioneers of planet-hunting outside Earth's solar system, said in an e-mail.

"This discovery shows that we Homo sapiens aren't shooting one inch into the universe to find planets that remind us of home. We are almost there," Marcy said.

Around Sun's 'twin'

The new planet, named Kepler-22b, has key aspects it shares with Earth. It circles a star that could be the twin of Earth's Sun and at just about the same distance. The planet's year of 290 days is even close to Earth's. It probably has water and voids.

The only trouble is the planet's a bit big for life to exist on the surface. The planet is about 2.4 times the size of Earth. It could be more like the gas-and-liquid Neptune with only a rocky core and mostly ocean.

The planet is 600 light-years away. Each light year is 5.4 trillion kilometers. It would take a space shuttle about 22 million years to get there.

"It's so exciting to imagine the possibilities," said Natalie Batalha, the Kepler deputy science chief.

Realizing that that "won't completely control its water" would be like being on an Earth ocean and "it's not beyond the realm of possibility that the ocean is such an ocean," Batalha said in a phone interview.

Kepler cannot find life itself, just where the conditions might be right for it to thrive. And when astronomers look for life elsewhere, they are talking about everything ranging from microbes to advanced intelligence that can be looking back at us.

Candidate planets

So far the Kepler telescope has spotted 2,326 candidate planets outside Earth's solar system with 1,094 of them potentially habitable ones.

NATALIE Batalha, Kepler deputy Science researcher at Nasa Ames Research Center, talks about the newly discovered planet Kepler-22b during a news conference on Dec. 5 in Mother's Field, California. —

Even though the confirmed Kepler-22b is a bit big, it is smaller than most of the other candidates. It is closest to Earth in size, temperature and star than either of the two previously announced planets in the zone.

The confirmation of one of two, though, has been disputed. The latest discovery has been confirmed several ways, including by two other telescopes.

This year, a European team of astronomers said they had confirmed another planet in the habitable zone, but that one was hot and barely on the inside edge of the habitable zone.

Size closer to Neptune

For Marcy, who is on the Kepler team, the newest planet is a smidgen too large. But, "that smidgen makes all the difference," he said.

Because its size implies that it is closer to Neptune's composition than Earth, "I would bet my bonuses that there is no hard, rocky surface to walk on," Marcy said.

Borucki thinks the planet is somewhere between Earth and gas-and-liquid Neptune, but that it has a lot of rocky material.

It is in a size range that scientists do not really know anything about. Measurements next summer may help and "astronomers have a better idea of its makeup," Borucki said.

Kepler spots a planet when it passes in front of its star. Nasa requires three of those sightings, before it begins to confirm it as a planet. Borucki said the third sighting for Kepler-22b happened a year ago, just before the telescope shut down for a while. It took several months to finish the confirmation. AP

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Aquino defends antipoverty efforts

BULONG PULUNGAN AWARDS President Aquino answers questions during Tuesday's Bulong Pulungan annual Christmas party and recognition day for outstanding public servants and private individuals held at Sofitel Philippine Plaza, Pasay City (JOAN BONDOC)

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT AQUINO defended yesterday his government's efforts to address poverty in the country and said he would more next week with the groups who raised the problem last week.

Speaking the Christmas party of the Bulong Pulungan forum at the Sofitel hotel, the President said he was surprised by the issues on banner story on Monday that exposed representatives of various sectors in a three-day summit on poverty, inequality and social reform last week had urged him to act swiftly on the problem of poverty.

He admitted that his administration had yet to reach the second half of 2010 "even before the poverty line but he said the groups failed to mention the big strides the government had achieved in responding to the plight of the poor.

"We started out with only 400,000 families of the 4.4 million families living below the poverty line. And in a period of roughly three a year and a half, we are now (helping) 2.3 million families," Mr. Aquino said.

He was referring to the P21 billion conditional cash transfer (CCT) program, which seeks to provide poor families monthly cash assistance of P1,400 in exchange for keeping their children in school, having them vaccinated and given medical care.

The President said this means the government had been able to make a 300-percent increase in reaching out to these poor families and covering them in the CCT program started in 2008 by then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

He also cited the P1.6 billion program to house in the next five years about 1,028,000 of 3,088,000 informal settler families living in Metro Manila.

There there were also coordinated efforts of the Department of Labor and Employment, Commission on Higher Education and Department of Education to provide marketable skills to poor students even if they only finished high school, he said.

"Hopefully we can guide our students to courses that will provide them with jobs as soon as they graduate instead of the current practice of enrolling in a course that is hot and then graduate when it is no longer the hot industry," Mr. Aquino said.

He said the government had deployed 20,000 nurses and midwives under the Rh (RH)3.0 program which addresses the problem of 40 percent of the populace who have access to health care and had enrolled about 5.1 million family beneficiaries for health insurance.

He pointed out that the Department of Agriculture had also improved the marketing skills of upland rice farmers.

Palace-Supreme Court fight escalates

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what exactly was done, how it was done, what were the happenings that were exploited and so on and so forth," he said.

Budget Secretary Florencio Abad, Presidential Adviser on Political Affairs Ronaldo Llamas and congressional allies also aired on the offensive a day after Mr. Aquino launched his hard-hitting assault yet on the high tribunal, questioning the legitimacy of Corona as Chief Justice and his perceived bias ly to Arroyo.

Occupy Supreme Court

Both Abad and Llamas harped on the President's theme of accountability to the people and the justices of the tenor against Arroyo as Palace supporters in media added to the "occupy Supreme Court" movement copied from a protest in New York against economic imbalance and corporate greed.

Llamas said the President's remarks on Thursday at the Makati Business Club assistance unit and on Monday at the Five National Summit on Criminality in Bicutan of Corona were an "attempt to remind the Chief Justice and the other members of the justice apparatus of the people's agenda and the obligations of public officials to responding to this."

"(President Aquino) is just echoing the sentiments of the vast majority, who feel that genuine justice cannot be served when the Chief Justice and the majority of the Supreme Court are loyal and accountable to only one person—GMA—and she, regard the interests of the majority," Llamas said in a text message. "I think that if you ask the ordinary citizen if they feel that the Supreme Court is partial to GMA, the answer will be a resounding 'yes.'"

"The President is just being true to his nature as well as his mandate—integrity against cynicism and impunity. And to this, he really has to move out of the box," Llamas said. "It really isn't easy to be on the straight path. Especially at the start, it's the most difficult."

Abad said the President's blunt words are meant to influence the high tribunal in cases involving Arroyo.

"It was in no way meant to influence the decision of the high court on cases involving Arroyo before it. It was meant primarily to remind our people in government, especially the high court, about where government's power emanates from, whether you're in the executive, legislative or judiciary," Abad said.

"We're from the people. And every high official and institution of government must always keep that (with) in mind," he added.

Healthy democracy

Speaking at a press conference, Assistant Chavez Majority Leader Romero Quimbo said Eugen Boy Teddy Brawner said the justices should not be too sensitive on interbranch debates, saying this was a sign of a healthy democracy.

"When the judiciary strikes down some of the things that we pass here as being unconstitutional we don't usually call it any legal basis, we take it as simply," Quimbo said. "We were not piqued."

"Let's not overreact," Brawner said, adding the court should not be stressed as a "united council."

Critics said the Palace was talking about a "mob rule." Sen. Ducille Lacson warned that Malacañang was sending a signal to local officials in the provinces that they could ignore court rulings and feared the council lead to anarchy.

The electoral sabotage charge against Arroyo stemmed from a claim by a provincial official in Maguindanao that he overheard Arroyo order then Gen. Rodolfo Mendiola Sr. a P2-M strategy for administration stronghold in the province in the 2007 senatorial elections. This official is facing charges in connection with the 2009 massacre of 57 people in Maguindanao.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel III, the principal complainant in the election irregularities in Maguindanao, has said he did not think the government had enough evidence in the case against Arroyo, who is currently confined at St. Luke's Medical Center, where she is undergoing treatment for a rare bone ailment.

Arroyo has also been accused publicly of graft and corruption and plunder although no formal charges have been brought against her. She has also been accused of stealing the 2004 presidential election. She has denied any wrongdoing.

Midnight appointment

Most of the members of the Supreme Court were appointed by Arroyo during her nine years in power. Corona's appointment as Chief Justice, on the other hand, has been criticized as a midnight appointment, made two days after the May 2010 elections.

But the high tribunal has relied on the legality of Corona's appointment and the executive branch later acknowledged the court's decision on the case.

Mr. Aquino has also decried the status of setbacks the administration had suffered in connection with his attempts to prosecute Arroyo.

He has called at the court's issuance of a temporary restraining order—an extraordinary measure to prevent irreparable harm and protect the people from the awesome powers of the state—that Arroyo sought when she was stopped from leaving abroad for medical treatment. The Palace said Arroyo was attempting to evade prosecution.

The President is also steaming from the Supreme Court's rejection of the Philippine Truth Commission he created by executive order that to investigate claims of irregularities committed by Arroyo.

The court said the formation of the panel was a violation of the equal protection clause to the Constitution because it was simply targeting Arroyo.

Bishops willing to mediate Aquino-Corona conflict

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Antonio Tagle, Cebu Archbishop Jose Palma, who is also president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and Cebu Archbishop Emeritus Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, according to Reyes.

Reyes and several other CBCP members around ostensible to a suggestion by Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile on Monday after Mr. Aquino openly derided Corona in front of him at the first National Criminality Justice Summit supposedly aimed at cultivating cooperation and coordination.

Enrile said the "best way" to resolve the conflict was for the Catholic Church and the other religious faiths to hold a prayer rally so these may "unravel" institution. "They are peacemakers," according to Enrile.

"I am OK with that specially this time of Christmas... a time for peace, reconciliation, understanding and respect," Reyes said.

Only upon invitation

Maribel Ilaleng Dimaliwat Gutierrez said it was important that the executive and the judicial branches of the bishop could see an facilitators who would not give any judgment.

Cebuano Bishop Georgerino Quitorio said he was hesitant to set aside or talk about personal issues (private). "They must be sensitive to the sentiments of the people... they must also listen to the feedback," Malgesi said.

In an interview with reporters yesterday, Archbishop Emeritus Oscar Cruz said he was open to Enrile's suggestion, but "only upon invitation."

"The one who will decide whether the Church would mediate or not is not the Senate President but the parties themselves concerned, which is the Chief Justice and the Pres-

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dent," Cruz said reporters.

But he doubted that the President would "go by what the Church would say" should an intervention be realized given the President's antagonism with the Church as an institution.

Hacienda Luisita decision

Cruz also said Mr. Aquino's ire "came to a boiling point" not on the account of the so-called Philippine Truth Commission, which was dumbed down by the Supreme Court, or of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, whom the high tribunal had allowed to seek medical treatment abroad.

"If I may interpret it right... the decision of the SC on Hacienda Luisita was what made him 'boil (inner) it is a very much owed for family wealth," Cruz said.

On August 22, the high court ordered the distribution of the 5,000-hectare estate owned by the family of Mr. Aquino to its 6,200 workers, settling the decades-long agrarian problem that was a major source of poverty and unrest in Central Luzon.

The Aquino administration revoked the 1989 stock distribution option under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program promulgated by Mr. Aquino's mother, the late President Corazon Aquino, after workers in the hacienda staged a strike in 2004, saying the arrangement did not improve their lives.

FPJ grandson asks Corona to inhibit self

From page A1

drew separate petitions asking Corona to inhibit himself from the deliberations of Arroyo's pending cases in the Supreme Court.

Llamanzares is the son of Senator Sen Llamanzares, chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB), who is the daughter of Pres. The movie senior here died in December 2004, seven months after losing to Arroyo in a presidential election in which he accused Arroyo of cheating.

Playing the role of a stressed working defender of the poor in a 1980s film actor called "Panday" (Blacksmith).

"We feel this is our opportunity to vindicate (for) justice that we've been deprived of all these years," Llamanzares told reporters after filing the motion for inhibition against Corona.

Asked if he had a personal interest in filing the petition, he said: "Of course, there is a personal interest. My family did not forget all the things that have happened to us... because of the 2004 (election)."

As a representative of my family, it's important that I show my support. We are after the truth, not just in 2004, but in all the cases against Arroyo that have taken place between 2004 and today," he said.

He added: "I'm doing this not just as a member of my family but as a student and citizen of this country. I can't allow the abuses that have been committed on such a high level to go unquestioned."

But died of control drumbeats and multiple-organ failure in December 2006.

Other petitioners

Joining Llamanzares in filing the petition were fellow student leaders Rhae Mikhael Alfonzo, Gibby Gerino and Rosaya Stinchcha.

Similar petitions seeking Corona's inhibition were earlier filed by Dennis Pineda Law of Banner Gloria Serwerk and by Attorney Bagtasis of Alliance para sa Makabansang Ekonomiya (BMB).

Members of the media could not help but remark on Llamanzares' physical similarities to his grandfather. Wearing a hat top lapels and a pair of dark sunglasses, the 19-year-old political science student also sported sideburns like that of Poe's.

Llamanzares said the citizen against the high court's supposedly questionable rulings were proof that "finally there are people willing to take the risk."

"We're all here to matter what your age is. You have a right to defend the truth and you have a right as a voter of this country to find out the truth behind your government," he said.

'Bulwark of democracy'

In their petition, Llamanzares et al. said judges should inhibit themselves from handling cases "in which (they) might be perceived, rightly or wrongly, to be susceptible to bias and partiality."

"This principle equally applies to the honorable court and to members... for the reason that it is the last bulwark of justice and democracy of the Filipino people," they said.

The group noted that before Arroyo appointed him as Chief Justice, Corona worked under the former President as her chief of staff and acting executive secretary.

They said Arroyo could not have put Corona in such sensitive posts if she "did not maintain a close personal and professional relationship with him," they said.

In his petition, Bagtasis claimed Corona's supposed bias for Arroyo was "clearly reflected in the consistency by which he voted in favor" of cases involving her.

Appearance of bias

He claimed that in 15 out of 19 "politically significant" cases from 2004 to 2008, the Chief Justice voted in favor of Arroyo and her administration. "He made a position adverse to (the Arroyo) only a meager three times."

During the Supreme Court's oral arguments on the constitutionality of the watch-list order that Justice Secretary Leila de Lima issued against Arroyo stopping her from leaving the country, Bagtasis said Corona showed his impartiality and partiality to the government "already prejudged" the cases against the former President.

"The voluntary inhibition of (Corona)... would prevent the appearance of bias... and would preserve the integrity and impartiality of the honorable court," he said in the petition.

Speaking to reporters, Bagtasis said that in filing the petition, "we are actually doing Corona a big favor because we are trusting to restore the faith of the people in the Supreme Court."

Straight path to tyranny:

TIMELINE OF THE RUSHED AND RAILROADED CASE OF ELECTORAL SABOTAGE FILED AGAINST CGMA et. al.

July 28,2011	Former Maguindanao election supervisor Lintal Bedol claims massive fraud was committed in the 2004 general elections and Arroyo was the principal beneficiary
Aug. 2, 2011	COMELEC issued Resolution No. 9266 approving the creation of a joint committee with the DOJ for the conduct of preliminary investigation of the alleged election offenses committed during the 2004 and 2007 elections
Aug. 15, 2011	Joint Circular No. 001-2011 was issued by DOJ Sec. De Lima and COMELEC Chairman Brillantes.
Aug. 23, 2011	DOJ and COMELEC promulgated Rules of Procedure on the Conduct of Preliminary Investigation on the Alleged Election Fraud in the 2004 and 2007 National Elections
Sept. 19, 2011	Lilian Radam, former provincial election supervisor in South Cotabato, and Yogos Martinzar, former election supervisor in North Cotabato, submit their sworn statements tagging former elections chief Benjamin Abalos as having personally ordered them to rig poll results in favor of Arroyo's administration senatorial candidates.
Oct. 17, 2011	Sen. Aquilino "Koko" L. Pimentel III filed criminal charges against CGMA, her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo and several others before the DOJ for Electoral Sabotage.
Oct. 20, 2011	Initial Report of the Joint DOJ-Comelec Fact-Finding Team on the alleged Electoral Fraud and Manipulation of Election Results during the 2004 and 2007 National Elections.
Oct. 25, 2011	DOJ issued a subpoena to CGMA regarding DOJ-COMELEC Case No. 001-2011(Electoral Sabotage/Violation of Omnibus Election Code, etc. and DOJ-Comelec Case No. 002-2011 (Electoral Sabotage).
	Subpoena was received by CGMA requiring her to appear in the preliminary investigation on Nov. 3, 2011 at 2:00 pm.
Nov. 3, 2011	Counsels appeared to get the documents at DOJ.
	During the hearing, the Panel, answering the query of counsels, said that the attachments in 001-2011 are the same attachments in the Pimentel complaint (002-2011), hence, no need to furnish copies of the attachments.
Nov. 8, 2011	CGMA filed an Omnibus Motion Ad Cautelam to Require Pimentel to Furnish Documents and for Production of Election Documents as Basis for the Charge of Electoral Sabotage.
Nov. 14, 2011	The only preliminary investigation and the deadline of the filing of counter-affidavits by Respondents.
	Joint Panel verbally denied CGMA's omnibus motion.
Nov. 15, 2011	Joint Panel issued the formal Order denying CGMA's omnibus motion, among others.
	CGMA through counsel received the said Order on November 16, 2011
Nov. 16, 2011	CGMA filed with SC petition for certiorari and prohibition against Joint DOJ-COMELEC Panel.
Nov. 16, 2011	Joint Resolution of the Joint DOJ-Comelec Preliminary Investigation Committee was issued recommending the following:
	a) That informations for the crime of Electoral Sabotage be filed against CGMA, Benjamin Abalos Sr., Lintang H. Bedol, Data Andal Ampatuan Sr., Jaime Paz and Peter Reyes.
	b) That the following respondents, namely: Michael C. Abas, Estrella B. Dibaae, Eliza A. Gasmin, Elsa Z. Aliven, Salias S. Arriba, Magsaysay B. Mohamad, Sakinga K. Edzela, Ragah D. Ayunan, Susan U. Canantsan, Russam H. Mabang, Asuncion Corazon P. Renerio, Nena A. Alot, Ma. Susan L. Albano, Rohaida T. Khalid, Arav M. Gao, Jeehan S. Nur, Alice A. Lim, Nonjaan P. Hangkal, Christina Rose M. Dalope, and Maceda L. Abon be ADMINISTRATIVELY CHARGED; and
	c) That the charges against Jose Miguel T.Arroyo, Bong Serrano, Nicodemo Ferrer, Reuben Basao, Alberto Agra, Andrei Bon Tagum, Gabby Claudio, Romy Ceydoy, Jeremy Javier, John Doe a.k.a. Butch be DISMISSED for insufficiency of evidence.
Nov. 17, 2011	Andal Ampatuan filed his Counter-Affidavit denying Engr. Ursas' statements on the 12-0 directive and manipulation of the elections.
Nov. 18, 2011	Comelec En Banc met at 7:30 a.m., and at 10:00 a.m. issued a Resolution approving and adopting the Joint Resolution of the Joint DOJ-Comelec Preliminary Investigation Committee, subject to the following modifications:
	a) That informations for the crime of Electoral Sabotage be filed against CGMA, Benjamin Abalos Sr., Lintang H. Bedol, Data Andal Ampatuan Sr., and Peter Reyes.
	b) That the charges against Michael C. Abas, Nicodemo Ferrer, Reuben Basao, Jaime Paz and Norie K. arias be subjected to further investigation;
	c) That the charges against Jose Miguel T. Arroyo, Bong Serrano, Alberto Agra, Andrei Bon Tagum, Gabby Claudio, Romy Ceydoy, Jeremy Javier, John Doe a.k.a. Butch be DISMISSED for insufficiency of evidence
	d) That the recommendation that Estrella B. Dibaae, Eliza A. Gasmin, Eliza Z. Aliven, Salias S. Arriba, Magsaysay B. Mohamad, Sakinga K. Edzela, Ragah D. Ayunan, Susan U. Canantsan, Russam H. Mabang, Asuncion Corazon P. Renerio, Nena A. Alot, Ma. Susan L. Albano, Rohaida T. Khalid, Arav M. Gao, Jeehan S. Nur, Alice A. Lim, Nonjaan P. Hangkal, Christina Rose M. Dalope, and Maceda L. Abo be administratively charged be subjected to further review by this Commission to determine the appropriate charges that may be filed against them;
	That the finding of lack of probable cause against Lilian S. Suun-Radam and Yoge C. Martinzar be rejected by reason of the pendency of their respective cases before the RTC of Pasay (Branch 114) and the Commission for the same offense under consideration.
	The Comelec files Electoral Sabotage charges against CGMA, Gov. Andal Ampatuan, and Atty. Lintang Bedol before the Pasay City Regional Trial Court.
	It was received by the RTC-OCC Pasay City (Crim. Case Sec. & Cashier) at 11:22 AM.
	On the same date at around 3:30 PM, Judge Mupas issued an Order finding probable cause against the accusers and a warrant of arrest was issued. The judge personally evaluated the voluminous record of the case for almost three or not more than four hours only.
	Arroyo was served the arrest warrant at St. Luke's Medical Center in Taguig City at 6:30 p.m., in the presence of her husband.
	CGMA filed Consolidated and Urgent Motions (1) To Suspend Proceedings, and (2) Objections to the Issuance of Warrant of Arrest and/or HDO. CGMA also filed an Urgent Omnibus Motion Ad Cautelam.

TIMELINE RE: RTC PROCEEDINGS

11:22 a.m. - Information was filed with OCC-RTC Pasay City*
11:30 a.m. - Case raffled off to Branch 112
11:45 a.m. - Case docket forwarded to Judge Mupas
3:30 p.m. - Order issued by RTC finding probable cause
4:30 p.m. - Warrant of Arrest issued against CGMA
6:30 p.m. - Warrant of Arrest Served upon CGMA*

No. of documents submitted to RTC:
Binder 1 - 490 pages
Binder 2 - 448 pages
Folder - 126 pages
Total - 1,064 pages

* Based on available documents

Nov. 21, 2011	Pasay RTC Judge Jesus Mupas issued an Order: 1. Motion for the issuance of HDO was DENIED. 2. RTC has the jurisdiction over the case; 3. Court noted the manifestation of Atty. Santos to take a second look on the judicial determination of probable cause. 4. Motion for Temporary Hospital Arrest was GRANTED. 5. Counsel for the Comelec was hereby given a period of three days from receipt of the Urgent Omnibus Motion filed by CGMA to file their comment.
	Hearing of all other Motions on Nov. 25, 2011 at 8:30 AM.
Nov.25,2011	Defense withdrew motion for hospital arrest; moved for house arrest.
	Dr. Mario Ver testified as to the current medical condition of CGMA
	Defense given 15 days within which to file motion for re-determination of probable cause
	Lawyer Maria Juana Valeza, lead prosecutor of the Comelec in the case, moves for the immediate transfer of Arroyo from the hospital to jail after her doctors testified that Arroyo is now fit to leave the hospital.
Dec.1,2011	In an order dated November 29,2011, Judge Mupas ordered the transfer of CGMA to Veterans Memorial Medical Center within five days.

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Pacquiao says Floyd Jr., JMM lead list of next possible foe

By Ray Guerra

ITS A three-way race for a juicy fight against Manny Pacquiao in May, with Floyd Mayweather Jr. ahead and Juan Manuel Marquez giving a spirited chase.

Lagging behind is World Boxing Organization light welterweight champion Timothy Bradley.

In a dinner with sports journalists Monday, Pacquiao said negotiations are going on, for his next bout after scraping past Marquez in their third fight on Nov. 12 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

A bout with Mayweather, the unbeaten World Boxing Council welterweight champion, stands to be the richest fight in the history of the sport with both boxers projected to earn at least $50 million.

Chances of the once dreaded Pacquiao-Mayweather cliff pushing through got a boost when Mike Koncz, Pacquiao's Canadian adviser, visited the camp of the flamboyant American for a new round of negotiations recently.

The bout is discussed too big that several quarters, including foreign investors from the Middle East and Asia, have expressed interest to underwrite the gargantuan project that could shatter the record 2.4 million pay-per-view buys posted when Mayweather fought and edged Oscar De La Hoya in 2008.

But the Pacquiao-Mayweather fight could be a victim of its own magnitude, with would-be investors trying to figure out how to recoup the money they'll put up to get the two fighters on the ring against each other.

Apart from the blood-letting protocol to be used, the shutting of HBO's microphones is a crucial issue for the fight to be forged.

Pacquiao's PPV stock increased after his third fight against Marquez generated a personal-best of more than 1.3 million buys, surpassing the Mayweather-Victor Ortiz showdown, which reportedly drew 1.25M fans.

Marquez wants a fourth bout with the Filipino pound-for-pound king, claiming that he was again deprived of a victory by the judges, who rewarded Pacquiao with a razor-thin split decision (two scorecards favored Manny).

Leaving fight negotiations to his promoters, Bob Arum, Dicopino, who was accompanied by wife Jinkee at the Shrine View Restaurant, said he would be staging a $100,000 14-ball billiards tournament and a $1,000,000 darts event as soon as possible.

Japeth heroics rescue Texters

By Marang S. Castillo

RESCUED for most of the night by being a defensive liability, Japeth Aguilar pinned the Barangay Ginebra on Sunday.

Tied at a huge 80-78 victory over Petron Blaze in the PBA Philippine Cup last night.

The 6-foot-9 forward-capped 2-will ending of the Texter Aramis Gilomen by knocking all his three points in that span to give the Tuason a twice-to-beat incentive in the quarterfinals.

Aguilar scooped up a Harvey Carey miss from the edge and completed a three-point play off Arwind Santos with 2.4 seconds to play in the fourth, done so what no much said was "half-a-team," completed the scintillating win to rise to 5-3.

The feared small the Texters can end up with a No. 2, even if they lose their last assignment to Barangay Ginebra on Sunday.

But among the strongest teams they will face in the quarterfinals is the one with the second worst record among the qualifiers.

The Boosters closed out with a 9-0 card and would drop to No. 3 overall in the event of an expected 8-like win over Hydrian.com tomorrow.

Already without Ali Peek, Aaron Aban, Ronald de Ocampo and Yuri Reyes, the feature Jon Ray Almaja to the first period because of a sprained left ankle, and Jason Castro in the third quarter after becoming of the same injury.

Then they nearly lost Aguilar on a coach's decision.

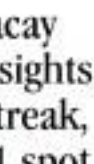
"He had sprained Japeth on defense," Reyes said.

In the first game, Powerade rallied a playoff spot with a 99-93 victory over Barako Bull.

POWERADE'S Allen Crisano grabs a rebound and draws a foul from Barako Bull's Dorian Pena. AUGUST SINCIONG

Boracay sets sights on streak, No. 1 spot

By Jeannine V. Reyes



BORACAY Rum vies to sustain its nearly three-week unbeaten streak in the PBA D-League Aspirants' Cup today at the San Juan Gym.

Now trouncing Bataan, the Rhums go for a fifth victory in the 4 p.m. duel which coach Lawrence Chongson said will be crucial to their bid to get all the way to the top spot.

"We have a long way to go but we'll really do our best to get five straight wins," said Chongson. "We want to be No. 1."

The Rhums build a 42-second behind Foreign Aaron and Gilmarie Orcullos which share the top spot at 6-1.

Hotel Pacific Pipes also shoot for a fourth triumph against the winless Cebu Energy Drinks at 2 p.m.

Led by Glenn Rhoderick and Marlon Jalandoni, the Hitters earned Jimli Chi Cheng Ramil, 72-68, for their third win in a row.

"We're counting club as a do-or-die match for us," said Chongson. "We are not yet safely inside the top six so we've got our work cut out for us."

Only the top two teams at the end of the eliminations end semi-straight semifinal berths, while the top six slug it out in the quarterfinals.

Palami: Successful year for Azkals, PH football

By Cedrik P. Topia

THE PHILIPPINE Azkals hope to build on a "successful year" as they gear up for more exhibition matches against foreign clubs and two major international competitions next year.

"Despite some setbacks, it's been a very successful, active year for Philippine football," said Azkals manager Dan Palami as he reflected on the Azkals' year at the 19th Annual at the Shakey's Ole Avenue in Manila yesterday.

"We look forward to a busy 2012. We hope to continue this momentum for us to really see the true potential of football in the Philippines."

The Azkals qualified for the AFC Challenge Cup semi-tournament for the first time and also made the second round of World Cup Qualifying.

The Azkals also played the David Beckham-led Los Angeles Galaxy in a match that further boosted the sport's popularity. But it came on the heels of the Under-23 squad's poor showing in the Southeast Asian Games.

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The Azkals also played the David Beckham-led Los Angeles Galaxy in a match that further boosted the sport's popularity. But it came on the heels of the Under-23 squad's poor showing in the Southeast Asian Games.

Palami said the Philippine Football Federation is eyeing 2010 World Cup qualifier New Zealand, Honduras and Vietnam as possible opponents for the February friendly.

The Azkals will also host a friendly next month at the Rizal Memorial Stadium and will again use the international friendly date on Feb. 29 to assemble their strongest squad in preparation for the AFC Challenge Cup in Nepal.

Palami said the Philippine Football Federation is eyeing 2010 World Cup qualifier New Zealand, Honduras and Vietnam as possible opponents for the February friendly.

OPEN SEASON Miguel Tabuena, PCTSI PH head Nina Soriano, Dr. Philip Ella Juico, Asian Tour head of business development Michael Bengtsson, MGAP president Leandro Mendoza, Wack Wack's PH Open organizing committee co-chair Pablo Sison, and Jay Raynor Flores with a ceremonial ball during the launching of the Philippine Golf Tour (standing at left); Jun Jones, Tommy Mannion (standing at right) and representatives of tournament backers Crowne Plaza, HSBC and Cathay Pacific.

Open to be seen in 200 countries

By Marang S. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINE Open, Asia's oldest national golf event, gets truly international next year when all four rounds of its 96th staging will be beamed to about 200 million homes in 200 countries.

Serving as the probable second leg of the 2012 Asian Tour, the PCTSI-backed Open is also expected to draw some of the biggest names in the circuit led by former two-time defending champion Rory Mcilroy.

And for the 32nd time in Open history, it will be played at the age-old Wack Wack four-time winner Angel Cabrera.

Jay Bayron, who finished second by a stroke to Parnevik, will lead the local campaign, as well as Asian Tour Order of Merit winner Juvic Pagunsan and two-time champion Frankie Minoza.

The tournament was launched yesterday at the exclusive club in Mandaluyong with Bayron, Miguel Tabuena, Asian Tour executive Michael Bengtsson, National Golf Association of the Philippines president Leandro Mendoza, Wack Wack president Philip Ella Juico, PCTSI executive Nina Soriano, national team chair Tommy Mannion and MGAP secretary general Jun Araneta gracing the affair.

"We still do not know who is coming," Mendoza said. "But we are hoping that the Asian Tour regulars are expected to play. "But we are hoping that players from more than the 10 countries represented last year [will be competing]."

Mannion was with a few under total.

Scoring for the event, tentatively dated Feb. 9 to 12, is not required to be low considering that Wack Wack will be traveling to Black Mark general manager Jojo Hechanova.

Surigao golfers pad Fil-Am golf cushion

BAGUIO CITY— Brent Surigao I scored 168 points for a 324 total and up his lead to 12 in Fil A on Force Hill golf course for the first title defense to the president Fil Championship Flight set tomorrow at the Baguio Country Club golf course in the Klick Fil-Am International Golf Tournament.

Surigao I got a two-over 62 on 24 four five Alaska yesterday as the name teenager to lead to double digits from the seven a passed during the opening day two Philippine navy GC.

Ramon Cajetanio chipped in 27, while Ed Lopez and John Boris added 24 and 23, respectively to count for the scores in the five to play, four to count tournament fueled by Toyota—which gave a Toyota Vios to the player who aces the holes 10 and 18th at the BCC and GM courses—Hyperion, Sky Empire and Wilson.

The Surigaos got a pair of 28 from Jimie Beach and Sid Ed Medenecosa, while Carlos Padilla and Mahabeel Roman added 25 and 24 to move to the team's day two production of 103 and 213 total.

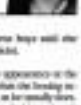
Action shifts to the premiere side with Brent Hills returning to a 360 to repeat the upset over most finished rivals Manila Southwoods and Wilcon.

Brent Hills Nicklaus returns with Rafael Garcia, Harold Llanera, Ana Bautista Aurelia II, Hugo Bayanzala, Peter Young and Juan Miguel Garcia.

They are up against seven time champion Manila Southwoods which will be led by veteran Jaspan Pinto, Steve Viaro, Timothy Pascual, Joseph Bandasing and the returning Hunter delos Santos.

Mission has Rudel Mangalindan, former pro Vince Laurel, King Barbarotes, Richard Jones and long bomber Jericho Bell.

Pacquiao sans his cordon sanitaire



IN HUDDLE

Ninth Cebu

THE CONGRESSMAN from Sarangani finished a wide, bright grin as he stood to offer his hand.

It must have been the 37th time or so I was introduced to the eight-division world boxing champ, dating back to the 1990s when he was still a pound unknown.

There was a time when I had a lengthy one-on-one interview with his fellow politicos mostly about a mystical experience with God that completely changed the course of his life.

Manny and God had spoken to him in one of his sweet moments and had urged him to change his ways if he wanted to receive his blessings.

Still, this time around, he did not recognize me.

"Governor," he said, smiling. "Manny Chow. How?"

* * *

A few moments after I arrived at the Harbor View Restaurant near the Quirino Grandstand in Manila where Manny hosted a dinner for select members of the press, Hans Sanapo took my hand and led me to the table occupied by Manny, his wife Jinkee and sports columnist-broadcaster Quinito Henson.

"Let me introduce you to the congressman," Sanapo offered.

I did not resist. The press boys said she was Manny's political publicist.

* * *

I deliberately made a late appearance at the affair because I was unsure that the feeding sequence would make sense, as he usually does.

I was surprised therefore to find him already there. He had arrived an hour earlier than I did.

Atlantic sports editor Megie Romero said Manny arrived an hour because he had to have early-for-another engagement.

Manny was normally dressed in a gray business suit. The boxing icon kept himself busy all night accommodating fans, foreigners included, who wanted to be photographed with him.

Liber sports editor Dennis Eusa, who said he had not seen the Pacman "for ages," admitted he was chuffed to be photographed with him.

* * *

At a little past nine, he stood up to deliver an informal speech.

"Merry Christmas. I hope you enjoyed the food and are all having fun," he said.

As of last night, he said he could not yet tell who his next opponent would be, or where the fight would be advertised.

"It could be Floyd Mayweather, Timothy Bradley or Juan Manuel Marquez. I don't know," Manny said.

Bradley was in the audience of the seven Pinoy champs to watch the contest between Mayweather and Marquez in retaliation fight.

Manny also talked about some of his plans for Philippine sports.

What I revealed most vividly is his plan to host another Fil-Ambassadors next year.

"It will be the biggest dance competition ever, with a guaranteed prize pot of P1 million," he announced.

The speech, short and sweet, was over in less than 30 minutes. There was no time for Q&A. The Pacquiao left soon after.

And on last Monday night, I met the man-in-action by the entertainment press at "The greatest hours in the world" for the 57th date or so. This time, he was more relaxed, more very accessible and very accommodating.

Perhaps it was because he did not come with his usual big entourage. There was no cordon sanitaire.

Patrimonio scores easy PCA victory

TOP seed Chelsie Monteromo opened her title bid with a 6-1, 6-0 demolition of Jessebelle Magpayo in the first round of the 2011 Philippine Colombian Association (PCA) Open women's singles event on the PCA indoor clay court in Paco, Manila.

The 18-year-old Pontevedra lifestyle jumped in the quarterfinals after Jasmine Tan Ho and Mordin Ramos failed to show up for their matches. The winners of said duel would have faced Monteromo.

"It dictated the tempo right away and never allowed Jessebelle to catch up," said Monteromo, last year's semifinalist in the singles event of the premier Invitational Tournament in Indonesia.

Also advancing were third seed Alleen Rogas and sixth pick Montreal Badua in the tournament presented by Cebuana Lhuillier.

Rogas also had an easy time disposing of Jasmine Tan, 6-0, 6-1, while Badua took out Lea Imotin, 6-2, 6-3.

Rogas will next take on Malia Tampoco, while Badua faces Mary Gonzales. Tampoco ended a spot in the second round with a 6-2, 6-0 win over Hannah Espinosa. Gonzales won by walkover against American Sabria Kruskowski.

Second-round winners: Alleen Rogas (vs.[1] 6-1, 6-0 winner Hannah Espinosa); Mikaela Badua (vs.[6] 6-0, 6-3 winner Lea Imotin); Malia Tampoco (vs.[3] 6-2, 6-0 winner Sabria Kruskowski); Mary Gonzales (vs.[4] 6-1, 6-0 winner Jessebelle Magpayo); Chelsie Monteromo (vs.[2] 6-1, 6-0 winner Jasmine Tan Ho); Mordin Ramos (vs.[5] 6-1, 6-1 winner Jessebelle Magpayo).

SAN BEDA's Anja Caruso and Ian Sebastian's ke Sangalang try to outdo each other for ball possession during their PCCL match on Monday. The Stags won, 83-73. ALVIN KASIBANG

Stags nip Eagles, gain PCCL finals

By Jasmine W. Payo

STAG senior one of its star trio, Ian Sebastian found a way to topple varsity heavyweight Ateneo and stake the first title berth in the Philippine Collegiate Championship League.

Calvin Abueva and Ian Sangalang were then made up for the absence of injured shooter Ronald Dayondi as the Stags rallied from 11-point down to the last six minutes to stun the Blue Eagles, 73-69, in the round-robin semifinals yesterday at the FEU-DLSU Paying U Arena.

"I was trying to tell them even if we play 100 percent, it's not a guarantee we're going to win against Ateneo, so we have to realize every possession," said coach Yopet Robinson after his ninth win clinched the No. 1 spot and the entire no-loss advantage in the Finals with a 2-0 record.

In the second game, Jhonet dela Rosa fueled a late run for a game-high 25 points as San Sebastian topped the perky University of Cebu, 83-77.

Abueva and Ian Bocbo, tied at 1-1, will dispute the last Finals berth in a knockout match on Friday, while the Cebu champion Webmasters banned out of contention with a 0-2 card.

The scores
San Beda 83
Ian Sebastian 19, Sangalang 12, Dela Cruz 11, Ramos 10, Mendoza 9, Ilagan 8, Tuano 5, Ferrer 4, Ramirez 3, Ramos 2, Abueva 0, Bocbo 0, Ramos 0, Ramos 0, Ramos

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Aplus METRO
Editor Alexander S. Chansley

2 NBI execs axed over extortion rap

Family of arrested Japanese woman says they gave ₱6M for her release

By Jaymee T. Gamil

TWO OFFICIALS of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) have been placed on floating status over reports that they extorted money from the Filipino foster family of a Japanese woman who was arrested for being an illegal alien.

In an order issued on Monday, NBI Director Magtanggol Gatdula ordered the relief of Security Management Division (SMD) chief Hosto Garcia and his executive officer, Jose Odulio Catubig.

NBI spokesperson Cecilio Zamora Jr. told reporters yesterday that the two officials were ordered to report to NBI Deputy Director for Administration Reynaldo Esmeralda Chiong.

Replacement named

In addition, Gatdula appointed head agent Arnold Lucero of the NBI Research Analysis Division as Garcia's replacement.

At the same time, the NBI chief ordered Chiong to conduct an investigation of the allegations against Garcia and Catubig.

Reports said that Gatdula's orders were based on reports that the two officials had asked the foster family of Hiroko Obara for P6M-million in exchange for her release. The amount was eventually whittled down to P3.5 million after negotiations.

The 32-year-old Japanese woman was arrested by NBI agents in Pangasinan on Oct. 29 for being an illegal alien.

According to the Marcanos, her foster family in Bugallon, Pangasinan, Obara came to the Philippines because she was escaping from the Yakuza which had killed her father and was now after her.

The Marcanos sought the help of Japanese columnist Ramon Pablo after they turned over P5 million in installments to SMD employees, including Garcia and Catubig.

Pablo later forwarded the complaints to Justice Secretary Leila de Lima who had ordered an investigation into the Bureau Gatdula's complaint.

He also directed the NBI to turn over Obara to the Immigration Bureau since she is an illegal alien.

Instead of complying, the NBI took Obara to the Japanese Embassy the other day, according to Pablo.

1 dead, 6 hurt in Valenzuela construction site accident

By Kristine Felicia Manguray

ONE WORKER died and six others were hurt after a metallic sound bar they were trying to attach to a wooden structure in a construction site hit a high-voltage transmission wire last Monday afternoon in Valenzuela City.

Police named the fatality as Jimmy Monares, 23, of Quezon province.

Those who were injured were identified as Jonathan Valenzuela, Jimmy Monares, Charlito Alejandro, Marlon Andallo, Emilio Bedoño and Noli Patag.

The five are now confined at Valenzuela Medical Center, said PO3 Dalton Rodriguez, case investigator.

Deadly contact

The accident happened at Cawluan Compound in Tinalon, Barangay Ugong.

According to the police report, the coronet between the high-voltage wire and the metallic bar sent electric shocks to six workers who were holding the bar.

Upon seeing this, Ortega rushed to help Valenzuela, the person nearest him, but he was electrocuted in the process.

Fellow construction workers managed to take the victims to the hospital, but Ortega was declared dead on arrival, investigators said.

Electric currents

"Of the victims, only Ortega's body did not release the electric currents trapped inside. That's why he died. When you get electrocuted, your body has to release the currents," he explained.

Work in the area resumed after what the police official called was an "unfortunate industrial accident."

SPO3 Jose Sapid, senior investigator, said that the other six who remain confined in the hospital were already in a stable condition.

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TRAFFIC SANTA. A traffic enforcer himself because of his Santa Claus costume, Ramon Hinojo, a traffic enforcer, directs the flow of vehicles on a major road in Manila. JOAN BONDOC

Manila security guard in love triangle kills self

By Jeannette I. Andrade

BOHOL (the center of a love triangle apparently proved too much for a 49-year-old security guard who killed himself before midnight with his service revolver in Manila on Monday.

Julius Bangit died instantly from a bullet wound on his forehead.

PO2 Jose Gondiao, of the Manila Police District (MPD) homicide section, said Bangit shot himself at around 11:30 p.m. inside a pension house along Adriatico Street in Malate.

Woman sued

Gondiao said that before the shooting, Bangit was manning his post outside the pension house when his girlfriend "Geralyn" appeared.

At the time, Bangit's live-in partner, Geralyn Hare, also a security guard, was on duty with him.

"A person in fight between the two women, Bangit told Geralyn to leave.

Irked by the gesture, Geralyn allegedly slapped Bangit, and instead that it was his love to pursue who should leave.

Geralyn also allegedly attempted to grab Bangit's .38 caliber service revolver.

Gondiao said Bangit prevented his girlfriend from taking the gun and begged her to let him go.

'Release me'

Hare spared Bangit telling Geralyn "Just release me, I've had enough and it's hers."

The guard then entered the house, gun in hand, leaving the two women standing outside the building.

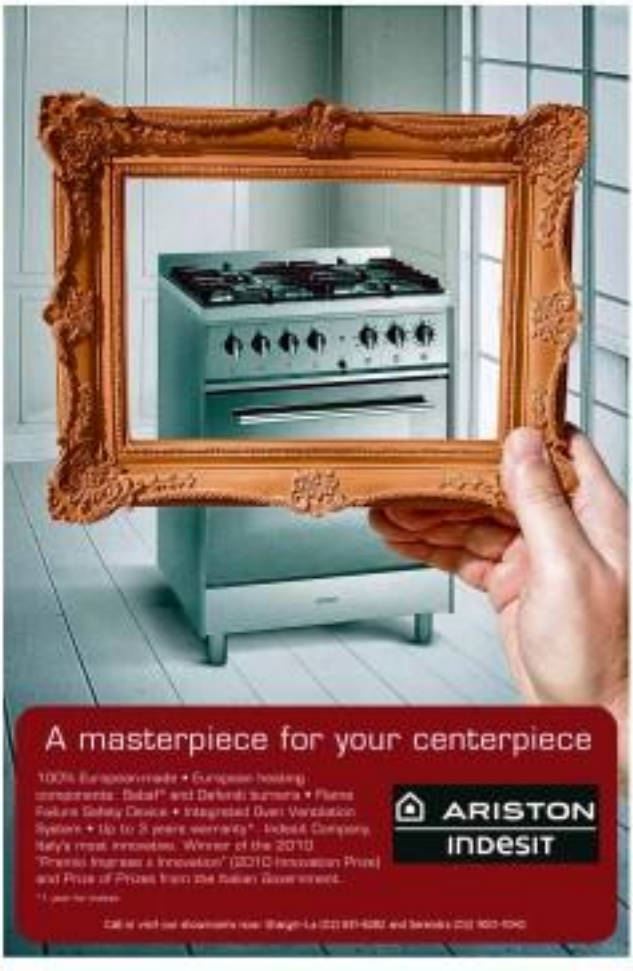
Minutes later, the women heard a gunshot.

Hare rushed inside the house and found Bangit lying on the floor, blood trickling from his forehead.

Hare sought their colleagues' help in bringing him to the nearest hospital, but Bangit did not make it.

DID YOU KNOW

"9,436 were 2,324 reported cases of dengue in Quezon City from Jan. 1 to Aug. 6 this year, one of the highest among the country's cities and municipalities. This was 3% percent of the 10,187 reported dengue cases in the National Capital Region during the same period. Zahaly Ocenlada Jaymee Hawaeli



Colostomy reversal looms after road rage suspect settles unpaid hospital bills

By Julie M. Aurelio

LAWYERS of road rage suspect Jason Ivler have urged a Quezon City court to take on his request for lawyers' fees after he was admitted to Quirino Memorial Medical Center (QMMC).

In a pleading, Ivler's lawyers Joseph Izquierdo Jr. and Friendly Mario Abante sought for the resolution of their bid for hospitalization fund more than a year ago.

The staff of Judge Lizalee Cortes of Regional Trial Court Branch 94 received on Monday two statements of accounts and 10 receipts from April 6, 2010 to Nov. 23, 2011.

The documents were presented as proof that Ivler had settled his outstanding bills incurred for his psychiatric confinement and surgery at QMMC, part of the court's conditions in granting the motion for hospitalconfinement to oversee Ivler's colostomy.

It's more than a year now the road rage suspect had been asking the court's permission to undergo surgery for colostomy reversal for normal elimination of the waste.

Ivler, through his lawyers, expressed willingness to pay all hospital bills for the surgery.

The suspect is facing multiple charges for the deeds of Renante Gloria Jr. in November 2009 during a traffic altercation.

Motorcycle hater kills driver, wounds another

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A MOTORCYCLE driver was killed while another was wounded yesterday morning by a man who told the police that he hates the sound made by the vehicle.

The fatality was identified as Bonifacio Idioro, who sustained head wounds in the head and multiple stab wounds in the body.

He was rushed to East Avenue Medical Center where he was declared dead on arrival.

The other motorcycle rider, Angelito Capalla, was taken to Quirino Memorial Medical Center for his head wounds in the back, shoulder and neck. At press time, he remains confined in the hospital.

Chief Insp. Rudel Maraylo, head of the Quezon City Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, said that the suspect, who attacked the victims with a knife—19-year-old Princess Enriquez—surrendered to police hours afterward.

"He claimed he hates the sound made by motorcycles and cannot stand the noise," Maraylo told the Sunstar.

He added, "He also said he feels for the life [because] he is being followed by motorcycle drivers."

Maraylo said he would recommend that Rodrigo undergo a medical checkup to determine his mental condition.

Rodrigo told the police that he lives in the street and that he used to be a construction worker until his contract expired.

According to Maraylo, Rodrigo was standing in front of the barangay hall when he saw the victims of Bike and Mania de Pedal Street in Cubao, Quezon City, when the victims drove by him on their motorcycles, one after the other.

Witnesses said Rodrigo had just left his motorcycle in front of the women's utility firm's office where he was attended by Enriquez.

The latter then went after Calapia who was still on his motorcycle.

After attacking the two men, Rodrigo had to a nearby building and came out only when the police arrived.

HOT JUST FOR PUTTING OUT FIRES
A fire truck parked near the US Embassy on Roxas Boulevard in Manila serves as a temporary shelter for nine homeless women. STORY ON PAGE A13

Toxics watchdog puts up toy checkup stall

MEMBERS of Ecowaste Coalition wear a "Toy Check-Up Tent" near the Baclaran Church in Parañaque City to warn shoppers against the hazards posed by cheap toys which contain toxic chemicals. ECOWASTE COALITION

By Mike Navales

AN ENVIRONMENTAL watchdog has set up a stall in Baclaran in Parañaque City to warn the public against the dangers of buying cheap underhand toys as gift-giving for the holidays, saying these may contain toxic materials.

"The lure come here to these consumers' emotions to the problem [of] buying and giving poisoned, unregistered and unlabeled toys to our children," said Thony Dizon, coordinator of EcoWaste Coalition's Project Protect.

"Toys tainted with lead, mercury and other toxic chemicals present a clear and present danger to young children who often put their hands and playthings into their mouths," he added.

As for the "Toy Check-Up Tent" just near the Baclaran Church, members of EcoWaste Coalition use a handheld device called the XRay Fluorescence (XRF) spectrometer to identify and measure the dangerous chemicals in a product, according to Dizon.

The XRF "allows the rapid elemental and nondestructive assessment of up to 20 elements in a product without destroying the sample," the official explained.

The gadget is also being used by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the US Consumer Product Safety Commission to determine a product's toxic content.

For her part, toxicologist Dr. Rowan Bedrano pointed out that "efforts must be made to prevent and reduce children's exposure to heavy metals" since children are susceptible to its ill-effects.

"Many of [these chemicals] are dangerous for a child's developing brain and body even at low levels," she said.

And for those selling products without labels, EcoWaste Coalition also asked consumers to habitually read product labels.

MMDA announces opening of new 'Christmas lanes'

By Mike Navales

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has opened motorists to use the new "Christmas lanes" to help decongest traffic in major thoroughfares this holiday season.

"[We] are rolling out our private motorists to use these alternative roads. This is for their own convenience," MMDA Chair Francis Tolentino said in a statement yesterday.

Shopping areas

The new routes which will be implemented by the agency include Jacinto side streets leading to Divisoria, Recto, Tayuman, Lerma side and Carriedo—areas frequented by shoppers looking for bargains.

Those will be in addition to the 7 "Christmas lanes opened by the MMDA last year.

Tolentino said that traffic constables would be assigned to different areas to ensure the smooth flow of traffic. He added that directional signs had also been put up along the new routes to guide motorists.

Improved speed

Data from the MMDA traffic discipline office showed that when the agency inaugurated the Christmas lanes last year, the average speed of vehicles was Edsa improved to 32 kilometers per hour (kph) from 20 kph in 2009.

The Christmas lanes start at the south and south entry points of Edsa. Motorists heading south may use McArthur Highway, Rizal Avenue Extension, C-4/Lolas, R-10, 4, Bonifacio and Rizal Boulevard to their destination and vice versa.

For the full list of the new Christmas lanes, Tolentino advised the public to check the MMDA website at http://www.mmda.gov.ph.

USED SERVICE VEHICLES FOR SALE

The **AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS)** through the AFP-RSBS Disposal Committee, invites interested parties to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties on "cash", "as-is, where-is" basis:

Item No.	Description	Owner	Minimum / Place Price
1	One (1) unit 2000 Toyota Tamaraw FX	RSBS	P 90,000.00
2	One (1) unit 2000 Toyota Corolla XF	RSBS	P 160,000.00
3	One (1) unit 1997 Toyota Corolla XF	RSBS	P 60,000.00
4	One (1) unit 1996 Toyota Corolla XF	RSBS	P 60,000.00

For interested parties, please note the following activities that will be held at the Board Room, AFP-RSBS, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.:

Pre-Bidding Conference	Deadline for Acceptance of Bids	Opening of Sealed Bids
Dec 16, 2011 9:00 a.m.	Dec 28, 2011 9:00 a.m.	Dec 28, 2011 9:30 a.m.

Bidding documents shall be available starting December 16, 2011 at the General Services Department (GSD), AFP-RSBS Bldg., 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

For inquiries, please call local or trunk at 912-8062 or 912-5958 during office hours.

(Sgd.) **GENELIZA T. HIZON**
Chairman, Disposal Committee

Boy with damaged liver needs to be operated on soon

By Santiago R. Alcantara

MARK Angelo Salinas, who will turn two years old next month, has been diagnosed to be suffering from biliary cirrhosis, a disease characterized by progressive inflammation and the destruction of small bile ducts and has the liver eventually hardening to organ failure.

His Tita Yvonne has been raising funds for the liver transplant doctors have recommended for his son. The cost for the operation has been pegged at P8 million.

According to Yvonne, Mark's liver has sustained a lot of damage and he needs to undergo an operation very soon.

"As a parent, I cannot stand seeing my son in this situation. That is why I vow not to stop in trying to sell T-shirts online via Facebook or PSBS mode or distributing collecting to solicit help from our friends in Manila to raise money," he said.

So far, the family has raised P15,000 from the T-shirt sales drive made alone[illegible], they still have a long way to go toward reaching their goal.

Donors' contact number is 0998-5064081. His wife Marlene can be reached at 0921-2956457 while his sister, Jessa Mae Salinas, can be contacted at 0918-4887847.

For those in other countries who want to donate money to the family, Mark Angelo's father is Ore-ancel at 09088698110 with bank code 856080881. They can also deposit their donations in Dona Irene's Bank of the Philippine Islands account (account number 0019 6004 86).

MARK Angelo Salinas

METROBRIEFS

Riot policemen break up students' protest march

RIOT policemen fired a water cannon to break up a protest yesterday by around 500 college students angered by the "Occupy Wall Street" movement in the United States, organizers said. The protesters had intended to march past camp Crame to Mendiola Bridge leading to Malacañang Palace but were blocked by riot police because they did not have a permit. "We were assembling for the big march when they blocked us and then tried to break us up by firing water cannons," Vanessa Bolilan, a spokesperson for the group, told AFP. An AFP photographer at the scene said about 200 riot police with shields and truncheons had blocked the protesters' path and fired a water cannon to disperse them. The students dubbed their march the "Occupy Bel" movement. Organizers said the march was inspired by the "Occupy Wall Street" movements in the United States, and intended to gather thousands of young people and "all set fields and breadwinners, students near the Palace. Bolilan said the protesters hoped to continue with occupying the area near the bridge, where they had prepared a range of activities including a tent concert. AFP

4 nabbed for rape

EIGHT youngsters were arrested yesterday for allegedly raping a 14-year-old high school student during a drinking spree in Pasig City. They were identified as Kevin Lloyd Lloyd, 19; Henry Obenza, 21; Mark Jayson, 18; and a 17-year-old boy. The four were charged with the rape and violation of Republic Act 7610 or the Anti-Violence against Women and Children Act of the city prosecutor's office. According to the complaint, the victim was invited to attend a small gang rape happened in Brevville 2 subdivision in Barangay Sta. Lucia. The victim, a third year high school student of a private school in Pasig City, met one of the four youngsters through texting, according to Spokesman Dr. Sunday, one of the four persuaded the girl to come over to his house to some drinks with his friends. After drinking a few glasses of brandy, the youngster took turns raping her. Authorities said the victim did not intend to tell anyone about the rape but her mother found her bloodstained underwear. Upon hearing this, the mother filed the victim's story. The parents sought the help of barangay watchmen who immediately accosted the four men. The four were brought to a barangay detention center at the Pasig police station. Nitz Cuñeta

Blood shed at Marikina's cityhood anniversary

MARIKINA celebrated its 15th anniversary as city with a mass blood donation drive over the weekend. The bloodletting was held at the Marikina Sports Building and came headed by the City Health office in partnership with the Philippine National Red Cross, Philippine Blood Center and the Department of Health. Mayor Del de Guzman announced that 200 blood bags were collected from the event whose main officials like Vice Mayor Jose Fabian Cadiz also donated blood. Aside from the success of this event for the celebration of the cityhood anniversary in Marikina is a multi-awarded city since one of voluntary blood donation. "De Guzman said. Nitz Cuñeta

RC Now Manila East holds 'Big Heart Concert'

THE ROTARY Club of Manila East (RCMEast) will hold a fund-raising concert at Ang Bahay ng Alumni for JP Dilmar for its 4th feeding program today. The concert features the MAP Band with the fellow as bandleader/director and rookie Chris and Art Mumbing as featured vocal artists. Dubbed the "Big Heart Concert," the band salvar will also lead dancers to a Happy Hour dance at 7 p.m. conducted by the concert. The beneficiaries of RCMEast's milk-feeding program are around 100 Grade 1 students of Tres Hits Elementary School in Sagpon City. The program, now entering its 4th year, has benefited thousands of students.

The WORLD

Editor Lamberto R. Glocoo

Syria set to allow observers

DAMASCUS—Syria said on Monday it conditionally accepts observers as part of an Arab plan, as a rights group reported militiamen loyal to the regime killed 34 civilians and dumped their bodies in a city square.

The Arab League, which has denounced to impose new sanctions on Damascus if it fails to comply with the plan for monitors, said it was considering the Syrian offer to allow them into the troubled country.

Syria had initially refused to sign an Arab proposal to send in observers to monitor its forces accused of rights violations by the UN, which says that more than 4,000 people have been killed since March in a protest crackdown.

But in a letter sent to the Cairo-based Arab League late on Sunday ere a League deadline was set to expire, President Bashar al-Assad's regime said it will accept monitors if its conditions are met.

"The Syrian government responded positively to the signing of the protocol" on sending observers "based on the Syrian understanding of this cooperation," Syrian foreign ministry spokesperson Jihad Makdisi told reporters.

While confirming the receipt of a Syrian government letter outlining the above here, Arab League Secretary General Nabil el-Arabi said it contained "new demands."

"We've contacted Arab foreign ministers and they have been apprised of the Syrian letter," Arabi said, adding that consultations were under way. AFP

Russians want end to Putin's rule

MOSCOW—Several thousand protesters took to the streets on Monday to demand an end to Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's 12-year rule after voters cut his party's parliamentary majority in an election that was condemned as unfair by European monitors.

Police said they detained 300 people in Moscow, where they confronted a crowd of 5,000 to 7,000 chanting "Revolution!" and "Russia without Putin" in one of the biggest opposition protests in the capital in years.

Police scuffled with some protesters and formed a line to keep them to said protest from marching toward the Kremlin. Some managed to break away and head toward the seat of power, but at least 30 were seized before they got there.

The Central Election Commission said the prime minister's United Russia party was set to have 238 deputies in the 450-seat State Duma after Sunday's vote, compared with 315 seats in the current lower house.

The result was Putin's worst election setback since he came to power 12 years ago and signaled growing weariness with his domination of Russian politics as he prepares to reclaim the presidency in an election next March.

President Dmitry Medvedev said Sunday's election was "free, honest and democratic," but European monitors and the field was skewed in favor of United Russia and the vote was marred by apparent manipulations.

The United States has "serious concerns" about the conduct of the election, a White House spokesperson said.

The observers said there had been "serious indications of ballot box stuffing" in a harsh verdict on the election that suggested United Russia could have suffered an even bigger decline in support if the voting had been completely fair. Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

$6,000 Holocaust victims to get German pensions

NEW YORK—Germany agreed after a year of tough negotiations to pay pensions to about 10,000 additional Holocaust victims worldwide—mostly survivors who were once starving children in Nazi ghettos, or were forced to live in hiding for fear of death. The agreement announced in Manhattan by Jewish leaders in New York based Claims Conference and the German government to "end about money—it's about Germany's acknowledgment of these people's suffering," said Greg Schneider, the conference's executive vice president. "They're finally getting recognition of the horrors they endured as children," he told The Associated Press. Of the new beneficiaries, 3,000 live in the United States. However, part of the agreement does not immediately cover survivors who were young Jewish children before 1938 or later. Germany will now pay monthly pensions to a total of 56,000 people who survived Nazi death camps and ghettos, or had to hide or live under false identities. Under the new rules, which go into effect June 1, any Jew who spent at least 12 months in a ghetto, in hiding or living under a false identity, is eligible for a monthly pension of 300 euros (about $375) a month. AP

Bombs kill 32 Shiite pilgrims in Iraq

BAGHDAD—A series of bombs tore through crowds of Shiite pilgrims celebrating a major observances in Iraq on Monday, killing at least 32 people, mostly women and children, and wounding scores more, local police said. The attacks, all the height of daylight, which commemorates the death of Prophet Mohammad's grandson Imam Hussein and defines Shiite Islam, underscored Iraq's fragile security as the last US troops withdraw from the country by the end of the year. In the first attack, a car bomb blasted at the end of one procession in the city of Hilla, killing 16, mainly women and children, wounding 45 others and leaving bloody pools, shoes and torn clothes scattered across the street. A second attack involving two roadside bombs killed six more people at another procession in Wita and wounded 16 more, police said. Reuters

Indonesia ratifies global ban on nuke tests

JAKARTA—Indonesia says it has ratified a global treaty banning nuclear test explosions. Negotiated in the 1990s, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty specified that the 44 countries with nuclear power or research reactors at the time needed to give formal approval before it could take effect. With the endorsement on Tuesday by Indonesia's parliament, the treaty is now only awaiting ratification from the United States, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea and Pakistan. AP

dream cup 2011

GOAL!

Pilipinas Futbol scores with SMART Dream Cup 2011

In one of the most epic battles in Philippine football history, the country's Azkals slugged it out on the field for a friendly match against the LA Galaxy, the newly-crowned Major League Soccer (MLS) Cup champions.

With face paints and clappers, thousands of football fans rooted for their favorite football stars – from locals' Phil and James Younghusband, Chiefly Calgdong and Anton del Rosario to international football stars David Beckham, Landon Donovan and Robbie Keane.

Dubbed as the SMART Dream Cup 2011, the edge-of-your-seat game was pumped with heart-stopping kicks and blocks from both ends of the field. After the adrenaline rush, the Azkals emerged with an experience that only an international championship team like the LA Galaxy can provide.

SMART Communications, the country's largest telecommunications network, congratulates the Philippine Men's National Football Team! Go Team Azkals!

GALAXY
ASIA PACIFIC TOUR 2011

SMART

IN THIS ISSUE
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■ **PH can become 'major'** gaming hub in region /B2

Editor Raul G. Manalo ■ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano
BUSINESS

PH banks to stay healthy in 2012

Fitch Ratings bullish on local financial sector

By Michelle V. Barro

FITCH Ratings said the Philippine banking sector would stay healthy even if the global economy suffered from another round of slowdown in 2012.

Given this expectation, Fitch said the credit ratings of key players in the country's banking industry were expected to remain stable throughout next year, aided by their generally healthy...

...ty to withstand a fresh economic slowdown and to preserve their liquidity and satisfactory capitalization," Fitch said in its latest report titled "Philippine Banks' Ratings Stable Despite Global Risks."

Fitch said the results of a stress test it performed on Philippine banks showed that key industry players were expected to post an average capital adequacy ratio (CAR) of about 13 percent, which was above the 10 percent required by the BSP should the banks encounter a hypothetical scenario of a significant number of defaults on their loans.

The average CAR of the banking system is currently at 16 percent.

Fitch also said that under the "stressed scenario," the lowest CAR could settle at 8 percent, which would be below the BSP requirement but just equal the minimum CAR that international standards considered to be comfortable.

Fitch said banks in the country might see their exposure rising next year as the uncertainties in the global economy push some of borrowing to the international market.

Nonetheless, the ratings firm said, the rising exposure were expected to remain manageable as far as banks in the country were concerned.

The credit-rating firm said banks in the country, like other

(PH) B2

Top property developers eye stake in Clark

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S biggest property developers are keen on investing in mega-scale projects outside the former US air base Clark freeport in Pampanga, seen as a potential growth hotspot of Metro Manila.

The SM, Ayala and Gokongwei groups are looking at vast property projects in the Clark freeport zone and Clark special economic zone that may be offered by the government for development under the public-private partnership (PPP) Framework.

Recently, tycoon Andrew Tan, led Megaworld Corp. bagged a P3-billion deal with the state-owned Clark Development Corp. to develop up to 500 hectares of the former US military property into a mixed-use complex.

A former US Air Force base, Clark today offers students investors in the Subic, government fund and non-fund investors, professional support services, amenities and other perks to in-

...diamond and other business locators. The government wishes to turn the 4,400-hectare main zone and 27,000-hectare subzone into an airport-driven industrial, services and logistics-related ecosystem, tourism and other sectors.

TOP B2

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Dec. 6, 2011
43.460

STOCK MARKET
Dec. 6, 2011
8.95

(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks end lower

MOST LOCAL stocks dipped yesterday as global credit watchdog Standard & Poor's castings a negative credit watch on 15 European states—including Germany and France—recommended investors that the region's fiscal contagion was far from over.

The main index Philippine Stock Exchange index shed 8.95 points or 0.21 percent to finish at 4,282.77.

All counters fell except for services, which was bucked by steady trading on telecom giants PLDT and Globe.

The mining sub-index was the most battered counter for the day, slipping 3 percent, as investors pocketed gains from Lepanto. Lepanto "A" fell 0.7 percent to P1.80 a share while Lepanto "B" was down 0.2 percent at P1.60 each.

Investors pocketed gains from Lepanto despite a much-anticipated report from South African mining firm Gold Fields showing upbeat gold production prospects for their mining venture, the Far Southeast project in central Surigao.

STOCKS B4

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PH can become 'major' gaming hub in region

Research firm sees revenues hitting $1.2B by 2015

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES has the potential to become a "major" gaming hub in the Asia-Pacific region and grow its gaming market to about $1.2 billion by 2015 as more privately-run casinos start operations, a research by global professional services firm PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) said on Tuesday.

In a recent report, PwC estimated that casino gaming revenues in the Philippines fell 1.9 percent in 2010 but were rebounding this 2011 to hit a full-year growth of 16.6 percent.

The report said the Philippines already had a "vibrant" casino gaming market and projected that new casinos would propel spending at a 16.9 percent compounded annual rate to $1.2 billion in 2015, making this country a major gaming area as well.

The casino gaming market in the Philippines last year was estimated by PwC at $668 million, which is ending this year at $668 million.

"The next five years will see Asia-Pacific emerge as the world's leading region for casino gaming," the PwC report said.

For Asia-Pacific as a whole, the report noted that casino gaming revenues would expand from $16.3 billion in 2010 to $79.5 billion in 2015 for an 18.5-percent compounded annual increase.

Macau is seen remaining as the largest casino gaming center in Asia-Pacific, growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 23.5 percent through 2015, outpacing Singapore's growth rate of 20.5 percent compounded annually.

"The jewel in the crown of Asia-Pacific's coolest-gaming industry is Macau, the largest single destination market in the world at $23.4 billion in 2010, more than twice the revenue of Nevada in the U.S.," the report said.

Australia was a distant second with a $4.4-billion market in 2010, followed by Singapore at $2.9 billion and South Korea at $2.6 billion.

The report said Australia was facing increased competition in luring "high rollers" from that Singapore has become an established market.

In the Philippines, PwC noted that Bello Corp's planned complex in Manila Bay was expected to open in 2013, although the project has reportedly encountered delays.

The report also noted that the state-run Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) was the monopoly provider with the exception of the Cagayan Special Economic Zone, which issues its own casino licenses. Casinos in the Cagayan region are only open to foreigners, it added.

The Philippines is building an entertainment complex along Manila Bay, called Entertainment City, but has required casino licensees to invest heavily in hotel facilities prior to opening their casinos.

CASINO gaming revenues hit a 16.6 percent full-year growth in 2011.

Stocks end lower

From page B1

Apart from telecom stocks, SMC and URC also banked the day's downturn.

Value turnover amounted to P5.36 billion. There were only 26 advancers, which were outnumbered by 132 decliners, while 40 stocks were unchanged.

"Most assets stumbled following news that S&P has placed 15 euro zone countries on negative watch," said investment bank Credit Agricole CIB.

Among the countries placed on S&P's negative credit watch were the 10-5 economic engines Germany and France. The Netherlands, Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Ireland and Belgium were likewise placed on negative watch.

Despite the overall index declines, however, foreign investors found selective buying opportunities resulting in P327 million in net foreign buying for the day.

Credit Agricole CIB said that ironically, the S&P announcement followed news that German Chancellor Merkel and French President Sarkozy have agreed on sweeping changes revealing some progress ahead of the much-awaited euro zone summit on Dec. 8-9. It said this "fiscal compact" would be welcomed by the European Central Bank, with hinted that it could be followed by stronger actions from the central bank.- Doris C. Dumlao

PH banks to stay healthy in 2012

From page B1

financial centers in other economies, would not be immune from the ill effects of a prolonged debt crisis in the euro zone. The bank said the crisis in the West would somehow affect profitability and asset quality of Philippine banks.

Fitch added that there was a probability, although remote, that credit ratings of banks in the Philippines might suffer downward pressure if the crisis in the euro zone would significantly worsen. This was because a heightened risk aversion could push out of borrowings, while an anemic economy could lead to further deterioration in asset quality.

Despite concerns like the Philippines, Fitch said that the country's banks remain well-capitalized and have ample liquidity buffers.

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Despite concerns like the Philippines, Fitch said that the country's banks remain well-capitalized and have ample liquidity buffers.

Fitch added

Bayan, PLDT sign interconnection pact

By Paolo G. Montecillo

BAYAN Telecommunications Inc. has signed a local network interconnection deal in the province of Camarines Sur with dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

The move will help boost its local-calling position in the Bicol market in its mission to continue to serve its subscribers and business customers in Camsur.

"We are pleased with this development with the support from STC as interconnection will further spur economic activity in Camarines Sur," Bayan carrier business head Silverio Medina said.

He said this was in line with the company's "vision to bring our the best in the lives of Filipinos through quality communication services."

Local interconnection means that residents and business establishments in a specific province or city can make calls through 7-digit local dialing without having to pay long distance charges.

Without interconnection, a Bayan landline subscriber would have to pay long-distance tariffs to call a PLDT landline subscriber within the same area, and vice-versa.

For its part, the National Telecommunications Commission said the new deal would benefit thousands of consumers in the Bicol area.

"This endorses, in cooperation with Bayan and PLDT, is a testament to the commission's commitment thrust of improving telecommunications services that ultimately benefits our consumers," added NTC Deputy Commissioner Delilah F. Delos.

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PSE LAUNCHES THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE 2012 BELL AWARDS FOR CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange (PSE) marks another milestone today with the launch of The PSE 2012 Bell Awards for Corporate Governance (CG). The Awards will recognize publicly listed companies (PLCs) and trading participants (TPs) adhering to high standards of corporate governance.

PSE will honor the top five companies among 252 PLCs and 8 TPs out of 133 on the basis of their compliance with the PSE's CG Guidelines for Listed Companies (CG Guidebook), issued in November 2010, and the PSE Rules, including the Listing and Disclosure Rules, Market Regulations and Trading Rules, and other relevant laws.

Awardees must be in good standing and must submit all reports and disclosures required. Recognized corporate governance advocates and market experts shall form the independent panel of judges to assist in the selection process.

The PSE has constantly emphasized the value of adherence to good corporate governance practices by all its stakeholders. As a key initiative in its Corporate Governance Improvement Program, the PSE released its CG Guidebook in November 2010 that complements the Code of Corporate Governance of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the government agency authorized to regulate the capital market.

The Guidebook aims to motivate companies to assess, improve, and inform investors of their good-governance practices. The Guidelines have been developed after careful study of internationally recognized corporate governance codes and best practices as well as a rigorous local and regional stakeholder engagement process. Lastly, the PSE CG Guidelines also serve as a basis for future policy development. The PSE is mandated to assist the SEC to organize listed companies and trading participants and the Board acknowledges the importance of rewarding excellent performance to motivate our partners.

"We are proud to launch the PSE Bell Awards to recognize excellence among listed firms and trading participants in PSE's history. All the candidates for The PSE 2012 Bell Awards will undergo a thorough and careful evaluation by the PSE and a distinguished panel of judges. The Board and Management of PSE hope that the 2012 Bell Awards will encourage listed firms and trading participant members to continue to improve their performance and add more value for their stakeholders through improved compliance and corporate governance practices," PSE President and Chief Executive Officer Hans B. Sicat said.

For more information on the PSE Bell Awards, please contact Ms. Marvi Tolentino of the Corporate Governance Office (CGO) via email: mstolentino@pse.com.ph.

The PSE is the country's only stock exchange, with 252 listed firms and 133 active trading participants.

The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc.
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pse bell awards
for corporate governance
Recognizing Excellence in Corporate Governance
The PSE 2012 Bell Awards for Corporate Governance
The Philippine Stock Exchange has always been in the forefront of promoting corporate governance to support and strengthen the development of the Philippine capital markets. A well-enforced corporate governance structure ensures better-managed companies, better protection of shareholders rights and interests, and results in increased confidence in both issuers and the securities brokerage industry.
The PSE 2012 Bell Awards for Corporate Governance puts into focus the Exchange's thrust in recognizing excellence in corporate governance standards and practices among listed companies and trading participants of the PSE.
All listed companies and member brokers of the PSE in good standing are automatically qualified and included in the evaluation process upon submission of the CG Guidelines Disclosure Template for listed companies, and the completion of the regulatory audit for trading participants.
For more details on the Awards criteria and mechanics, please contact:
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Yield on 25-year treasury bonds eases to 6.656%

Gov't agency says banks in 'very liquid condition'

By Bernelf W. Dumlao

THE YIELD on the 25-year treasury bonds yesterday slid further to 6.656 percent, -97.3 basis points lower than the previous 7.116 percent sold by the most recent issue of the same tenor.

Also, yesterday's yield for the issue was 18.5 basis points lower than the 6.823 percent prevailing for those deals in the secondary market at the time of the auction.

Investors tendered a total of P22.315 billion or almost four times the volume on offer. The Bureau of Treasury raised P5 billion in planned.

National Treasurer Roberto R. Tan said in an interview that the auction results showed "the very liquid condition" of the domestic financial market.

"All we seen that there is demand for long-term government securities because of that," Tan said. "This liquidity is a result of the [recently held] bond exchange and the government's program to be long-term issues."

He said a further easing of interest rates might be possible depending on the economic data for the remaining three months of the year.

This effort settled the conventional fixed-rate treasury bonds (FXTBs) auction on the same level.

Tan also noted that conditions would be manageable" in the National Treasurer Office said the rate of increase in prices of consumer goods settled at 4.8 percent year-on-year in November, bringing year-to-date inflation to the same level.

Last week, Singapore-based BIS Group said Philippine inflation was seen to weaken steadily over the next three months from a peak in October.

ING said that because of this, it expected the Monetary Board to keep its benchmark rates steady for the rest of the first quarter of 2012 before folding it constant for the end of the year.

This would bring the BSP's overnight borrowing rate to 4.25 percent.

"Inflation should have already peaked at 5.1 percent in October and should start trending lower to stand 4 percent by February next year. Food price pressures from crop damage notwithstanding," ING said.

"With inflation unlikely to pose a threat just yet, growth concerns will dominate," it added.

Tender offer for Digitel starts today

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) has set the schedule for its mandatory tender offer to buy out minority shareholders of recently acquired Digitel Telecommunications Philippines Inc.

This was part of the consolidation of PLDT and Digitel to form the biggest telecommunications group in the country today.

"PLDT is implementing a tender offer to acquire the remaining 3.06 billion common shares representing 48.44 percent of the issued and outstanding capital of Digitel held by shareholders other than PLDT," the company said in a disclosure to Manila.

At the same time, PLDT said Digitel can holding convertible bonds issued by Digitel would be allowed to convert their holdings into common shares on or before Dec. 8. These shares can, in turn, be sold back to PLDT.

PLDT estimated that third parties hold bonds that could be converted into 2.25 million common shares in Digitel. PLDT said it would acquire these shares at P1.9033 apiece, the same price PLDT acquired its existing Digitel shares.

Once completed, PLDT said Digitel would apply for a voluntary delisting. The company said shareholders may choose to be paid in PLDT shares, or a price of P1,500 each, or in cash. The tender offer was scheduled from Dec. 7, 2011 to Jan. 9, 2012.

PLDT's tender offer comes after it acquired a 51 percent stake in Digitel from the Gokongwei family's holding firm, JG Summit Holdings Inc.

Under the two-step group that acquires at least 18 percent of any listed firm is required to offer other shareholders to buy their shares at the same price of the original transaction. This tender offer rule aims to protect investors by allowing them to divest from a company when there is a significant change of ownership that may affect the way it operates.

With Digitel now under its control, PLDT controls about two-thirds of the country's telecom industry, both in industry revenues and subscribers.

Earlier this month, Digitel said it would increase its authorized capital stock to P20 billion from P4 billion to accommodate the conversion of P14 billion worth of obligations into common shares by 2013 and 2014.

The convertible bonds accounted for a significant portion of the P60.1 billion paid by PLDT to acquire a 51 percent stake in Digitel from JG Summit. — Pearlyn L. Manuel

Fitch sees shrinking margins for telcos

By Paola G. Planilla

PHILIPPINE telecoms firms have enjoyed "unsustainably high" levels of profits over the last decade, but these good times are or an end as more Filipinos choose "unlimited" promo offerings to avoid expensive access rates.

In a new report, global debt watcher Fitch Ratings said margins would continue to shrink for fixed phone companies as demand switches from incumbent, call and text messaging services to low-margin broadband Internet packages.

"Fitch believes that price competition will continue to affect earnings revenue per user in 2012, despite the creation of a duopoly following PLDT's (Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.) acquisition of the Gokongwei group's Digitel Telecommunications Philippines," the firm said in the report.

PLDT's acquisition of Digitel, operator of mobile brand Sun Cellular, solidified the group's dominance in the telecom market, increasing its market share from just 50 percent to around 70 percent.

Fitch said the biggest challenge for Philippine telecom companies was anticipated by the adoption of "all-you-can-eat" packages, which have downgraded revenues from the traditional bread and butter voice call and text messaging services.

"This is due to the agency's expectations that PLDT will continue (Digitel's) unlimited tariff offerings, which have been disruptive to the market in general," Fitch said.

Nida Sosa, executive director of Fitch's Asia Pacific Telecommunications team, said operating "drivers" or earnings before income tax, depreciation, amortization and rent, margins have been "unsustainably high" for Philippine telecom companies. Gil said rent rates in the Philippines remain one of the highest in the Southeast Asian region.

Sosa said these high margins were likely "short-term" as more on increasing adoption of "all you can eat plans, and from an unfavorable change in revenue mix toward low-margin data services."

A recent directive by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) has also forced phone companies to reduce text messaging rates between networks, benefiting millions of subscribers.

The increasing popularity of broadband data services for both households and mobile users has also forced local companies to dip deeper into their pockets and increase capital spending to expand their networks.

Earlier this year, the country's largest telco PLDT announced a plan to increase investments in its network by about 28 percent year-on-year for 2011 and 2012 to improve services.

Last month, Globe Telecom followed suit, announcing an P800-million network expansion plan over the next few years.

These moves are in anticipation of the higher demand for data-driven and Internet connections spurred from household and business Internet users.

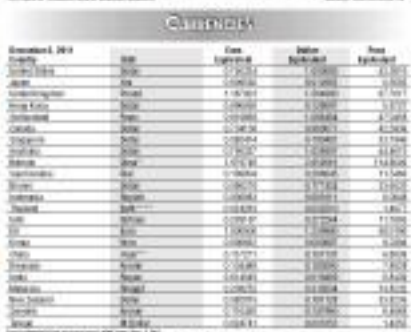
But Sosa said the increase in spending for both firms would not likely affect PLDT or Globe's credit ratings obligations.

Fitch said PLDT and Globe were expected to maintain strong healthy income levels, although lower than in previous years. About nine out of 10 Filipinos have mobile phones today.

Last week, Fitch upgraded the rating on Globe's long-term foreign currency obligations from junk status to the investment investment grade of "BBB-", the same rating for PLDT.

PLDT/DIGITEL Lead President and CEO Napoleon Nazareno (4th from right) steps the ceremonial bell during the company's listing of P1.6 billion worth of bonds on Fri 9 bonds due 2016 at the Philippine Dealing and Exchange Corporation (PDEx). PLDT Director Jose Ma. Del Rosario Jr. (3rd from left) has expressed optimism that there would be more greater participation in the domestic bond market, where the total value of outstanding retail tradable corporate debt has already reached P1.9 T. P1 billion is owned by 15 companies, joining those during the listing were PDEx President and COO Cesar Consing (far left), PDEx Chair and CEO Vicente Cuneta (fourth from left), and PLDT Co-Vice Chair Lourdes Josephine Yap (third from right).

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE



CURRENCIES

The Greg Domingo 'shakedown'

AUTHENTIC Trade and Industry Secretary Gregory Domingo has been doing the rounds "shaking down" businessmen these last few weeks.

Or so some misconception people would like to think.

Biz Buzz has learned that a number of "big businessmen" have received calls from people asking for money on the DTI chief's behalf.

Others, the callers claim to be staffers at the Office of the Secretary or sometimes...as a really brazen display of incest—claim to be Domingo himself.

The funds are solicited allegedly for projects of the secretary or as a requested deposit for favors he has to offer (the amount requested ranges from P200,000 to P40,000, and the "favors" are asked to wire the funds to specific money remittance centers).

At least two businessmen, we are told, have actually made payments. Tsk tsk.

Of course, Domingo is not the only Cabinet secretary whose name has been used in this scam, as previous editions have shown. Even Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo and Secretary Hilario Davide.

So all you personal envoys out there, remember: Don't believe those callers! Because this is not from a real shakedown (a duster!).

—Marites L. Lacson

Roller coaster ride

PRIOR to its voluntary trading suspension yesterday (lifted within the same session at 11:45 a.m.), mining magnate Felipe Yap's Lepanto had dashed at the stock market as the market anticipated an upbeat gold drilling report by Intrepid Mines, a joint venture Lepanto helps finance, on Intrepid's Didipio project in northern Cordillera.

Lepanto "B" (open to foreign investors) shares also earlier benefited from a recent rule move (see MSCI's small cap index).

But after a much-anticipated report by Gold Fields came out, the market dumped Lepanto's stocks. Some doubters said the market chose to sell on news, noting that the latest report did not offer anything new and that the only difference was that Lepanto, for the first time, had officially hyped it up simply by seeking voluntary trading suspension.

Those who are still upbeat on the stock, however, say the market has yet to fully digest the latest Gold Fields report, being also technical and all that. Behind all the jargon, one fund manager said for long and short of it was that the production potential for Didipio was two to three times bigger than what was originally expected. But as Lepanto itself has been already sent squarely into the zone of MSCI realignment, investors found an excuse to pocket gains yesterday.

And while Lepanto was out of commission for most of the trading session, stock pundits instead gobbled up four holdings (another firm owned by Yap) and Manila Mining (a subsidiary of Lepanto) as proxies.

But reflecting the underlying play, Dmci ended the volatile Manila Mining "A" and "B" shares reversed to negative territory at closing. —Doris C. Bumatay

Cash machines

AS part of efforts to make banking transactions easier, Philippine Bank of the Philippines is hands has deployed at its branches a new generation of "cash deposit" machines that allow real-time crediting of cash deposits. BPI president Aurelio Montinola III said these machines look like regular ATMs but are really deposit-taking machines, unlike the regular ATMs where the processing and crediting of deposits takes time—up to practically several days. This eliminates the need to queue up before a bank teller.

Montinola said BPI was experimenting with cash machines because based on its surveys, almost with a lot of cash—like mall vendors or service operators—would need to make deposits almost every day. This, in turn, allows better management of cash flow that will hopefully translate to better productivity.

With a local branch network of 900 plus (5 overseas branches), BPI feels it has reached an optimal scale and that capital spending henceforth would focus on enhancing the use of technology and electronic banking channels as well as the transition of existing branches.

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ADB sees 4.8% growth for PH

Prolonged crisis in euro zone considered in forecast

By Michelle V Ramos

THE ASIAN Development Bank sees the Philippine economy growing 4.8 percent next year, before the growth rate elevated to the country's economic officials but nonetheless faster than the growth estimates for this year.

The expectation of the ADB that the Philippines would post a faster growth rate in 2012 already took into account the possibility that the debt crisis in the euro zone would be prolonged and could even worsen.

Anticipated growth drivers for the Philippines next year are remittances, which should continue fueling household consumption, and a likely increase in government spending after budget officials were criticized for under-spending this year.

For 2011, the ADB said it expected the Philippines to grow 3.7 percent. This was consistent with the government's pronouncements that the domestic economy might grow by less than the minimum target of 4.3 percent this year on account of anxieties dampened by the country's exports given the crisis in Europe as well as the sluggish growth of the United States.

The government was hoping the country would grow between 4.3 and 5.3 percent this year and then accelerating to the ideal growth of at least 7 percent in 2012 and throughout the medium term.

In its latest report on its outlook for economies in East Asia, the ADB said the region was expected to continue growing at a decent pace next year, but the growth rates were seen to be below 7 percent. The ADB also said that economies in the region would take a significant hit should the crisis in the euro zone worsen.

"The euro zone sovereign debt crisis has continued to worsen, and would have serious yet manageable repercussions to East Asia should it evolve into a full-blown financial and economic crisis," the ADB warned.

Compared with the 4.6 percent growth forecast for next year for the Philippines, the ADB's growth estimates stood at 4.5 percent for Thailand, 4.7 percent for Malaysia, 6.2 percent for Vietnam, 6.5 percent for Indonesia, 7.1 percent for Hong Kong, 8 percent for Singapore and 8.1 percent for Taiwan.

The bank said the crisis in the West has the potential not only to see exports of emerging markets like those from East Asia, but also to cause volatility in foreign portfolio inflows. This was because the crisis in the West could either bring too much inflows or cause capital flight if investors become too risk-averse and decide to hold on to cash.

The ADB said a prolonged crisis could also disrupt trade as the cost of borrowing, such as that for purposes of funding trade, could increase.

"The cautiously optimistic outlook for emerging East Asia is subject to major downside risks: a deep recession in both the euro zone and the US, protectionism or tight trade finance; destabilizing capital flows, and persistent or resurgent inflation," the ADB said.

The ADB added that given the likely global economic picture for 2012, the Philippines and other countries in East Asia were advised to implement initiatives that would strengthen their domestic economies regardless of what was happening offshore.

One of these initiatives was to increase intraregional trade to rely less on export earnings from the developed countries.

Lehman hearing may herald end of bankruptcy

Bloomberg News

Boston.

Shareholders, whose stock hit a high of $86.30 a share in February 2007 according to Reuters data, will receive nothing, as is typical in bankruptcy. Unsecured creditors, depending on the type of debt, will receive from 21.1 cents to 27.9 cents on the dollar, if Peek approves the plan at the hearing.

Peek, who is tasked with determining whether the bankruptcy plan is fair and equitable, is expected to set a date for Lehman's exit from bankruptcy soon. he confirms the plan. Debtors it can start paying creditors. The creditor is most apt through any other issues, such as other types of recovery it must set aside for claims expenses.

Lehman's bonds rose in the hearing with support from more than 95 percent of its voting creditors and many of its major operations behind it. Lehman saddled some of its biggest opposition from Barnstable Brian such as Goldman Sachs and Paulson & Co. in 2008 and 2011, by merchandising the plan around them and changing its payout schemes.

Lehman's last hearing, in which the judge approved the details of the vote that were sent to voting creditors, lasted about three hours. The hearing is essentially the last time creditors can voice objections, however, and votes that a stock has become aside on the judge's calendar in case it is needed.

Many of Lehman's biggest assets have been sold while the company was in bankruptcy, such as its investment banking operations, which went to Barclays Plc. within days of its filing.

But more than half of its $65 billion in assets remains to be sold, including the trove of its stakes in asset managers Neuberger Berman, its stake in apartment owner Archstone, two banking units and some private-equity investments.

Lehman's 47 percent stake in Archstone is seen as one of its most valuable assets. Last week, Equity Residential agreed to buy a 26.5 percent stake in the company for $1.225 billion from Bank of America Corp. and Barclays, which together own most of the balance of the company.

Reuters

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LIVING THE DREAM

Hyundai paves the way for the youth to fulfill football aspirations

The Asian Cup, witnessed in its landmarks, Hyundai has built on its reputation as one of the strongest automotive brands in the world. Now, it has carved a new legacy as a champion of sportsmanship through football.

What began as a simple partnership with FIFA in 1999 has turned into a global phenomenon that has touched the hearts and lives of football fans and participants alike, setting the stage for Hyundai's commitment to bring football fever to new heights, and for the sport to become a venue for Hyundai to share values of teamwork, innovative, and sportsmanship—values that resonate Hyundai's resolve toward becoming a lifetime partner of excellence in motoring and beyond.

Right after its successful support of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, Hyundai declared its intent to extend its partnership agreement with FIFA, the world football governing body, to an unprecedented long-term period, lasted for sponsoring the FIFA World Cup™ in 2018 and 2022 in the product category of an Automotive Official Partner. The additional 8-year extension until 2022 will enable Hyundai to gain sponsorship rights to all FIFA competitions, exclusive marketing opportunities, extensive global media exposure and affiliation with FIFA's special events and development initiatives.

"Since our first association with FIFA in 1999, our commitment and support for FIFA has been unrivaled," said Mong-Koo Chung, Chairman and CEO of the Hyundai Motor Group. "FIFA has always set a benchmark for us, pushing our brand value and reputation to the highest levels. We are confident that this renewal will further enhance our business values and corporate vision."

Aside from FIFA World Cup™, Hyundai is also popping support for the 2012 UEFA EURO, underscoring the automaker's commitment in making itself an indelible influence in the world of football.

Hyundai makes its mark in Philippine football

In the Philippines, Hyundai, through official distributor Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI), has made headway in advancing opportunities for the Filipino youth in entry football, and help them realize their dreams as players of the sport.

(L-R) Atty. Maximo Alkuino, PFF Vice President; Mr. Ma. Jo Perez Agustin, President and CEO of HARI; and Ipe Arevalo, Philippine Asian Football, exchange tokens of the signing ceremonies of the 2nd Hyundai Next Generation Manila Cup Football Festival.

Since its launch of The Next Generation Football Camp in 2010, in partnership with the Manila Soccer Academy (MSA), Hyundai has successfully supported football camps and friendly matches for football teams hailing from various schools and communities. The activities brought out the best that the Filipino youth has to offer, and brought football enthusiasts together in an aim to develop their own champions and elevate team spirit to a more dedicated level.

On its second year, HARI has once again shown Hyundai's commitment to further the Filipino youth's football skills as the Hyundai Next Generation Manila Cup Football Festival, and the Monday Football Madness, a football clinic for kids, and an offshoot of HARI's Fantastic Fridays held in 2010. The exciting display of football action during the said events marked Hyundai's intensity in building the passion for football among the Filipino youth. "We at HARI, strongly support Hyundai's endeavor to endear football to Filipinos, through activities that build in the youth the values of being a true MVP or Most Valuable Player—sportsmanship, discipline, and teamwork," said Ms. Ma. Fe Perez-Agustin.

Action team up at The Dream Cup.

A moment for all at The Hyundai Next Generation Manila Cup Football Festival.

Hyundai is right where football action is.

President and CEO of HARI. "As we mark the second year of the Hyundai Next Generation Manila Cup Football Festival, we are further inspired to continue our support for football and make our shared dream with Filipinos possible—and that is to make future champions of our country's current pool of energetic and talented football players."

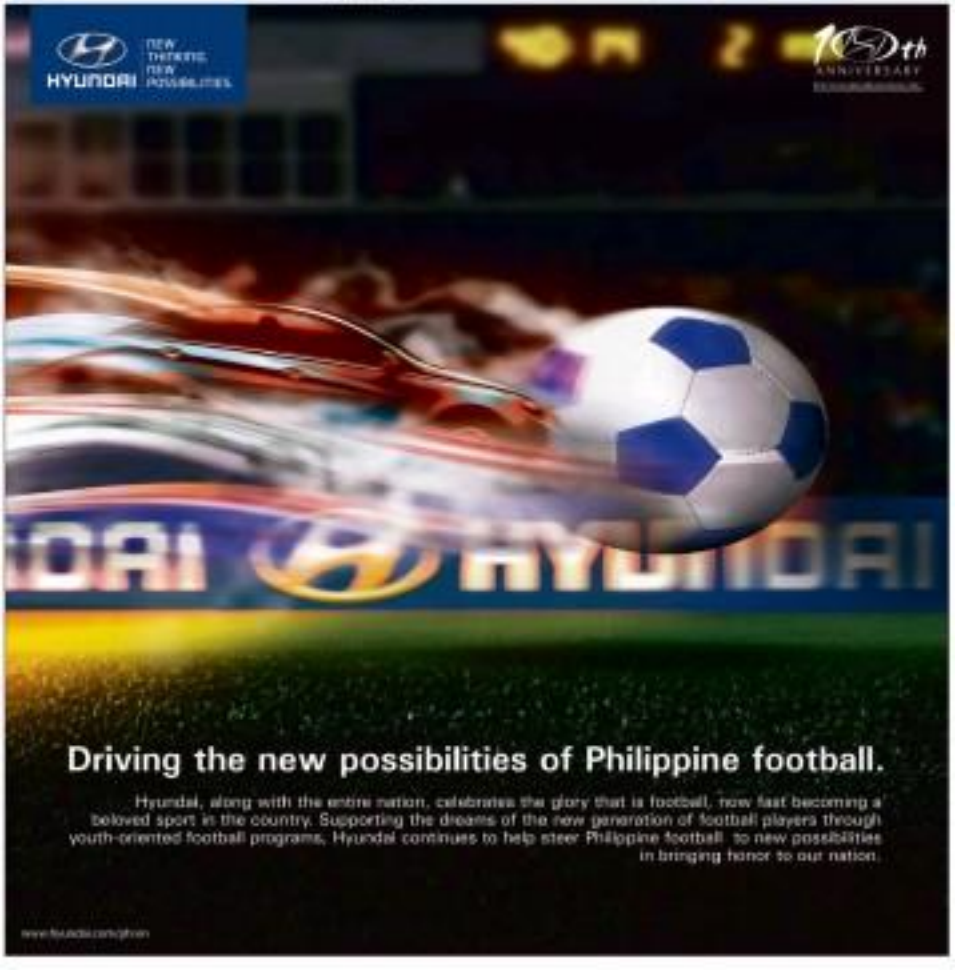
Bringing on the football dreams

And the recent years have indeed shown that the dream may not be far from possible as the country now has a football gem in its possession—the Philippine Azkals.

Very recently, the entire nation witnessed the biggest football event of the year—The Dream Cup, in an inspiring display of Filipino pride and sportsmanship, the Philippine National Football Team, famously known as the Azkals, played a friendly match against Major League Soccer champions Los Angeles Galaxy in a historic football game at the Rizal Memorial Stadium. An awesome and dreamlike display of attacks, defense and precise team passing, which kept the Filipino spectators, fans and enthusiasts, on their feet, the match concluded with a score of 6-1 in favor of the LA Galaxy. The Philippines' only goal, made by Phil Younghusband in the 61st minute of the 1st half, demonstrated the true fighting spirit of the Azkals. In the end, the game proved victorious, as both teams exchanged jerseys as a sign of unity in diversity amid the cheers of fans.

In all the spectacle that has been seen from the game, Hyundai's presence was rife with every ounce of strength and perseverance like the Azkals had—the kind of determination that Hyundai shares in its pursuit of making new mobility experiences possible for people everywhere, especially in a beloved global sport like football.

With the inspiration that comes from the Azkals and the young players from the Hyundai Next Generation Manila Cup Football Festival, the country's dream to make its mark in the global arena is becoming more and more a possibility than ever before. And with Hyundai, football will remain alive and thriving for football dreamers everywhere.



Driving the new possibilities of Philippine football.

Hyundai, along with the entire nation, celebrates the glory that is football, now fast becoming a beloved sport in the country. Supporting the dreams of the new generation of football players through youth-oriented football programs, Hyundai continues to help steer Philippine football to new possibilities in bringing honor to our nation.

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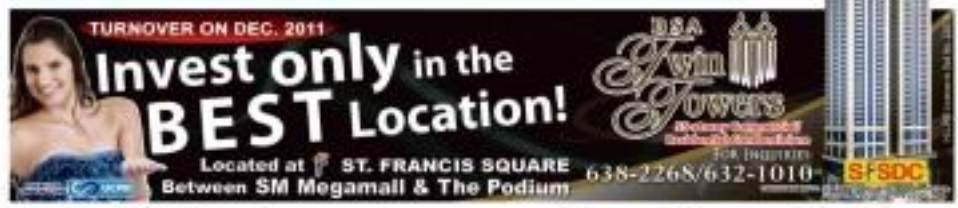
BUSINESS



Rate of rise in consumer prices slowed in Nov.

Inflation stands at 4.8% as price increases eased

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE COUNTRY'S inflation slowed to 4.8 percent in November from 5.2 percent in October due to slower price hikes in food, utilities, transport, and other items, according to the National Statistics Office (NSO).

The NSO based its data on a new series using 2006 prices.

The agency reported slower rates of increase in the heavily weighted food and non-alcoholic beverages (4.6 percent in November from 5.7 percent in October); housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels (3.7 percent from 4.5 percent); furnishing, household equipment and routine maintenance of the house (2.1 percent from 2.5 percent); health (3.1 percent from 3.4 percent); transport (6.6 percent from 6.7 percent); and education indexes and a decrease in the communication index (4.7 percent from 5.1 percent).

The food and non-alcoholic beverages index at the national level also came in slower at 4.8 percent in November from 5.7 percent in October. Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, likewise, eased 3.7 percent.

Inflation in January rose in at 4.1 percent. It peaked at 5.2 percent in June and again in October.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas set its 2011 inflation target between 3 to 5 percent.

"In terms of the upward pressures on prices, October was a more difficult month. Food and fuel prices were exerting tremendous pressure on prices last October," Gil L. Tyson of the University of Asia and the Pacific said in a text message.

With a report from Reuters

Plan to hike toll fees hits speed bump

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE PROPOSAL to hike toll rates at three expressways in Luzon has hit a speed bump, with the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) warning that adjustments in fees may be delayed.

Operators of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEx), the Manila-Cavite Toll Expressway Project (Cavitex) and the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road (Star Toll) all want to raise motorists' fees by the start of the new year.

But multisectoral groups are opposing the adjustments until recent increases in the prices of basic commodities like food and fuel, which have taken their toll on consumers.

According to its rules, the TRB needs to publish its newspaper the notices regarding the approved adjustments in rates three times in as many weeks. If this schedule is to be followed, the latest that the TRB is allowed to publish notices will be on the second week or third week of December.

The last notice may be published on the first week of January—the same week the adjustments are supposed to be implemented.

"The last two weeks of December is sufficient, but it will be tight," Cuejao said. At Tuesday's hearing, Cuejao said lawyer Ernesto Francisco questioned the procedural rules being used by the TRB to process the applications.

"Since this is a fundamental issue, the TRB instructed ... appointees to submit comments or positions on the matter by Monday next week," Cuejao said.

Operators have petitioned the TRB to allow them to increase toll at the SCTEx by 19 percent, at Cavitex by 17 percent, and Star Tollby 7 percent.

East Asia faces euro zone headwinds

ADB cuts 2012 growth forecast for Asean economies

HONG KONG—The Asian Development Bank on Tuesday trimmed its 2012 growth forecast for emerging East Asian economies including China, as the euro zone debacle threatens to drag the global economy back into crisis.

The Manila-based bank now expects domestic product growth forecast to 7.2 percent for the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) plus China, Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan, from 7.8 percent in September.

It also mapped out an "extreme scenario" of European and US meltdowns, which could drive 1.2 percent off growth next year in East Asia including Japan, from a forecast 5.4 percent to 4.2 percent, bank officials said.

"The worst case scenario is for both the US and euro zone to fall back into recession, pushing the global economy into a deep slump," the ADB's flagship East Asia regional economic update said.

With headwinds blowing out of Europe, the bank said its "cautiously optimistic" outlook for the Emerging East Asia region excluding Japan was under a thickening black cloud compared with its September forecasts.

"The cautiously optimistic outlook for emerging East Asia is subject to much greater downside risks now than just a few months ago," it said.

"The global economic recovery could flounder if the euro zone and the US fall back into recession, causing another global financial crisis."

It said "major downside risks" included a deep recession in Europe and the United States, high oil prices/inflation and persistent inflation.

If the euro zone's troubles caused a new full-blown crisis for the global economy, the bank said its first task would be "serious yet manageable" as long as governments responded decisively and collectively.

"Emerging East Asia must prepare for a prolonged crisis and would post crisis recovery by implementing appropriate short-term macroeconomic responses and pursuing necessary long-term structural reforms," the report said.

"Government spending would help maintain the growth momentum while central banks would have to deftly manage the monetary levers to keep inflation "anchored."

"With the euro zone's sovereign debt crisis unfolding and risks of faltering global recovery rising, macroeconomic policy must remain cautious and prudent," it said.

The ADB said a defense against trouble in Western markets lay in "increasing intraregional trade and financial integration, and expanding links with other emerging economies."

China was the strongest performer in the region but even the world's second biggest economy was feeling the pressure, posting 9.1 percent growth in the third quarter compared with 9.6 percent in the first half of 2011.

The ADB said China's economy is set just would grow 8.8 percent in 2012, compared with its September forecast of 9.1 percent.

Asean's four middle-income economies—Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand—are expected to grow 6.1 percent in the second half compared with 6.4 percent in the first six months of the year.

The ADB said intraregional trade and domestic consumption would shield the region from the worst of the global fallout.

"While the region's economic expansion has moderated this year, it remains robust enough to line with recent historical trends," it said.

"Exports and industrial production, while slowing, has continued to grow. The economic slowdown is partly due to rebalancing sources of growth from external to domestic demand."

Regional financial systems had been "little affected" by volatility in the credit markets and were keeping the investment pipeline liquid.

"Growth in bank lending, while slowing, remains robust," the report said.

Even so, a sharp downturn in Europe and the Asian economies on the United States would have inevitable ramifications for East Asian banks, especially in financial centers such as Hong Kong, Singapore and Singapore.

Capital outflows would hit export-driven markets and consumer confidence, eroding domestic spending.

"Severe global credit would also hurt Asian bank liquidity and possibly increase the cost of borrowing for investors," the ADB said. AFP

China braces as European crisis adds to economic strains

HONG KONG—Europe's festering debt crisis is adding to worries on China just as the country is pricking its property bubble and facing a manufacturing downturn, slashing the ability of the world's No. 2 economy to prop up global growth.

Leaders in Europe are mulling a regional bank as they wait to find a breakthrough at a summit Friday to avoid the disintegration of the euro overseas currency and the global financial panic that could ensue.

Such a scenario would slam China by triggering economic growth through lower demand for its exports. It would also prompt Beijing to slow the rise of its currency in a cornil—since beating trade tensions with the US and other nations that say China's yuan is already too cheap.

Even if the euro survives its currency doesn't by 17 nations remains mostly mired, China and other Asian countries will still face the daunting prospect of a recession in Europe next year and anemic growth in the US—both critical markets for the region's cars, electronics, textiles and other exports.

During the 2009 global recession, China's fresh and easy style stimulus kept its booming economy on track. Its Asia and other parts of the world, it helped soften the impact of the economic upheaval. The stimulus also unleashed high inflation, a torrent of low-quality bank lending and unchecked jockeying in the property market. Beijing is still trying to contain those difficulties, pressuring in response to a new downturn will be much more restrained.

The effects of Europe buckling beneath debt, austerity and financial market turmoil, and slash like growth in the US, are already being felt in China. Factory production shrank in November for the first time in nearly three years, and labor unrest is increasing as employers cut staff. AP

A FREEMANS works on a Buick at a General Motors (GM) dealership in Shanghai on Dec. 6, 2011. The US auto giant said its sales in China surged more than 20 percent in November from a year earlier to 237,218 vehicles, a company record for the month, supported by strong demand for passenger cars, including the Buick brand, the company said in a statement. AFP

Asian stock markets slip on S&P warning of euro zone downgrade

HONG KONG—Asian markets fell in cautious trade Tuesday as a blanket & Poor's warning of a possible downgrade for the euro zone effort news that France and Germany had outlined a plan to save the single currency.

The decision by S&P came as European leaders prepared for a two-day summit considered crucial for the future of the euro zone, where debt crisis has sent global markets into turmoil.

BNP senior institutional trader Peter Copeland said the market was anticipating positive political leadership over the crisis, but added: "The S&P move is a reminder that it's not always."

Tokyo gave up 3.39 percent, or 1,09.82 points, to 9,575.16 and Seoul lost 1.61 percent, or 28.06 points, to end at 1,502.62.

Sydney closed 1.48 percent, or 64.1 points, lower at 4,237.2 after Australia's central bank cut interest rates and warned of headwinds in the global economy.

Hong Kong fell 1.44 percent in the afternoon and Shanghai was off 0.43 percent.

S&P said on Monday it had put the ratings of 15 of the 17 euro zone countries, including Germany and France, on negative watch. AFP

Brent dips toward $109 per barrel as Europe's debt woes continue

SINGAPORE—Brent crude fell toward $109 on Tuesday as a warning by ratings agency Standard & Poor's that it might downgrade euro zone countries' tempered hopes for a concrete conclusion to the region's debt crisis.

The S&P news also overshadowed ongoing tensions between Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) producers Iran and the West that could lead to crude supply being disrupted from the world's fifth largest exporter.

Brent crude fell 21 cents to $109.50 a barrel, after settling down 13 cents at $109.81 on Monday. The benchmark has lost ground in four out five trading sessions, Reuters data showed.

US crude shed 24 cents to $100.75 a barrel. It had settled almost flat at $100.99 a day earlier.

"Prices had run up last week because traders have been positioning themselves for a positive resolution to the euro zone crisis, and they've arrived at a level where any negative news like the S&P report will result in some tweaking of positions," said Ric Spooner, chief market analyst with CMC Markets in Sydney.

Asian shares and the euro were also weaker after S&P said it had told 15 of the 17 euro zone countries that it might downgrade them within 90 days, depending on the outcome of a summit to deal with the crisis on Friday.

The threat of a supply risk from Iran, which has helped keep Brent prices above $100 a barrel, eased slightly after diplomats and traders said the European Union is becoming sceptical about slapping sanctions on imports of Iranian oil due to fears that an embargo might damage its own economy. Reuters

Lehman hearing may herald end of bankruptcy for financial icon

NEW YORK—Lehman Brothers Holdings Corp is about to take its last step toward exiting a more than three-year long bankruptcy process, a move that should enable it to begin paying billions of dollars owed to creditors, lawyers said yesterday.

Lehman, which filed for bankruptcy in September 2008 and unwound the global financial crisis, is due to present its parent plan to Federal Bankruptcy Judge James Peck on a Tuesday morning hearing in Manhattan court.

The defunct financial institution said in a recent court filing the plan essentially terminates the effort it has made while in bankruptcy to sell assets and make payments to creditors.

During the past three years, Lehman has sold billions of dollars' worth of its assets and other assets as it worked with debt investors and former trading partners to hammer out a plan to how to divide the fortune of its assets that remained.

Lehman's strict down plan proposes to pay out $65 billion in periodic distributions to those creditors starting in what it previously estimated would be early next year.

After bankruptcy ends, the company will have a new board of directors, the members of which Lehman released in a court filing on Monday. They include many former Lehman executives, such as Caymark Financial Group Inc., American International Group Inc., Goldman Sachs Group Inc. and Morgan Stanley.

They are as follows: Frederick Arnold, Robert Gifford, Thomas Ewert, Jesse Mahoney, David Haber, Ronald Tanemura and Owen

CUSTOMERS check digital camera at Japanese optical giant Olympus at a camera shop in Tokyo on Dec. 6, 2011. The camera has probing a massive cover-up of losses at Japan's Olympus said two former company presidents approved the long-running scheme, and that the "core of its top management was rotten." AFP

Apple vs Samsung ruling mistakenly reveals secret details

A US court error on Friday offered a brief glimpse at information that Apple Inc. and Samsung Electronics have tried to shield from the public during their high-stakes patent litigation.

The material appears to be less important for what it says about the companies than what it reveals about efforts to keep court proceedings secret.

In declaring Apple's bid to stop Samsung from selling its Galaxy smartphone and tablets in the United States, US District Judge Lucy Koh's ruling inadvertently included details she had intended to block out. The judge's staff quickly realized the error, sealed the electronic document and posted a redacted version but hours later.

The Koh version, which Reuters obtained while it was publicly available, did not expose the technical inner workings of the iPad—or anything close. Rather, it contained internal company analysis about the smartphone market, as well as some details about Apple's parent licensing relationships with other tech companies.

The lawsuit, which Apple filed in April in a San Jose, California federal court, says Samsung's Galaxy products "slavishly" copy the iPhone and iPad. The South Korean electronics maker says Apple's arguments lack merit.

The case is scheduled for trial next year. The 9-May ruling means Samsung can continue selling Galaxy products for now.

Selling documents line by line is standard in intellectual property cases. Inventors, academics and other observers have expressed concern that some judges too readily accede to litigants' claims that documents contain trade secrets and must be kept private.

Judges have wide latitude in granting company sealing requests, and Koh has granted all of Apple and Samsung's requests to keep documents secret in the case.

Some courts in legal briefs from both companies were kept entirely secret for months, and often released with redactions.

After an inquiry from Reuters last week, Koh issued new guidelines as that redacted briefs become public immediately.

Timothy Holbrook, an intellectual property professor at Emory Law in Atlanta who reviewed Koh's Friday ruling at Reuters' request, said there did not appear to be any trade secrets among the blacked-out portions.

"Most of it just seems like it was sealed out of an abundance of caution," Holbrook said.

In an e-mail on Monday, Koh declined to comment on a pending case. Representatives for Apple and Samsung also declined to comment.

The California case is just one battleground in Apple's and Samsung's brawling legal war, which includes more than 20 cases in 10 countries as they jostle for the top spot in the smartphone and tablet markets. Reuters

Fed urged to boost US economy

Growth slowdown seen as greater threat than rising inflation

MUNCIE, Ind. — The Federal Reserve must take immediate steps to inject new life into a sluggish US economy, even at the risk of boosting inflation, a top Fed official said on Monday.

"There is simply too much at stake for us to be excessively complacent while the economy is in such dire shape," Chicago Fed President Charles Evans told the Ball State University Center for Business and Economic Research. "It is imperative to undertake action now."

Evans' renewed call for monetary policy easing came after a Friday government report showed that the US unemployment rate rumbled to a two-and-a-half-year low, 8 (what?) of recent economic data suggest that US economic growth may rise sharply this quarter, topping a 3-percent annual rate.

Evans cautioned against putting too much store in recent positive data, saying that new money claims in the last year month-to-month economic indicators had caused Fed officials to be too optimistic.

Known for his dovish views on inflation, Evans was the only Fed policy maker to dissent last month on the central bank's decision to leave monetary policy unchanged. Then, as today, he called for further easing to boost the recovery.

Since then, the US unemployment rate has fallen from 9 percent to 8.6 percent, and data from manufacturing to retail sales suggest the pace of US economic growth may accelerate from the second quarter's 2 percent annual rate.

Worries over a potential clash from the European debt crisis and likely fiscal tightening next year dampen that outlook. Evans said he was "hopeful" Europe would find a solution to its debt woes, and urged US lawmakers not to set their fiscal "teeth" to the quick "just because it's good grooming."

Echoing a frequent refrain from the hawkish chief of the Dallas Fed, Evans said monetary policy cannot do it all alone.

But he made it clear that he believes the Fed must do what it can, repeating his call for the Fed to keep interest rates low until unemployment falls to 7 percent or inflation threatens to top 3 percent.

Reuters

BUSINESS

Merkel, Sarkozy demand tough EU budget treaty

Stricter rules for fiscal discipline sought

PARIS—France and Germany rallied Monday for Europe's leaders to agree on strict rules for fiscal discipline at their summit this week in a bid to convince unnerving savings drawn-grades if they fail to act to end the euro zone debt crisis.

The bold call by President Nicolas Sarkozy and Chancellor Angela Merkel for a rewrite of the EU treaty to set uniform tough budget standards across the euro zone raised hopes that the region might finally take decisive, comprehensive moves to end the crisis.

But S&P's warning hours later that it might cut the ratings of the two giants and 13 others if they continue to debate raised the stakes for the Dec. 8-9 summit in Brussels and Friday.

The summit is "an opportunity for policymakers to break the pattern of crisis we consider to have been deliberate and piecemeal measures to date... and advance a credible response to the crisis that would get the turned around, big investor confidence," S&P said.

"If the responses of policymakers is not viewed by investors as robust, we believe market confidence could take another, possibly steep, drop downwards" that could force the downgrade, it said.

Sarkozy and Merkel appeared united and determined Monday when they offered a new direction for the single currency zone as it teeters on the brink of collapse.

The two backed automatic sanctions against EU member states whose deficits go over three percent of gross domestic product.

They also called for a "reinforced and harmonized golden rule" on deficits, which could oblige euro states to enshrine the commitment to balance their public finances in their constitutions or legislations.

The new rules would be enshrined in a treaties EU Treaty signed by all 27 EU members or, in an alternative, by just the 17 euro zone members with the other nations signing on a voluntary basis.

Sarkozy warned of a "forced march to reestablish confidence in the euro and the euro zone."

AFP

Many Americans already done with holiday shopping early in the season

MORE than a third of United States shoppers are already done with most of their holiday shopping, a survey showed Monday, signaling that retailers need to offer bigger incentives to win sales in the few weeks before Christmas.

The findings underscore the fragility of the US recovery, since consumer spending accounts for about 70 percent of the nation's economy.

About 32 percent of people surveyed by America's Research Group said they finished a majority of their Christmas shopping in November last month included Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving when stores pulled out all the stops on discounts to woo shoppers during their biggest season of the year.

More than 6 percent completed most of their holiday shopping in the first weekend of December.

The questions were asked exclusively for Reuters as part of a larger America's Research Group survey.

"There is very little retailers can do unless they really have some incredible sales that force that consumer to remember if they want... to make an extra purchase now," said America's Research Group President Bill Bonner.

About 26 percent of people surveyed said they plan to take a break from shopping, now that the Black Friday weekend is behind them.

"Many, many consumers, when they get those early bird specials on Black Friday, decided that that was going to be the big purchase for their family," Bonner said, adding that many shoppers spent more than they planned on Black Friday.

REUTERS

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BUSINESS

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Meralco users may expect lower rates in Dec.

Distributor cites drop in power generation charge

By Amy E. Remo

CUSTOMERS of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) may look forward to a reduction in their power bills this December after the power distributor reported a drop in generation charge by 27 centavos per kilowatt-hour to P1.31 per kWh.

Households consuming 200 kWh a month can expect a decrease of P27 in their electricity bills, while those that use up 400 kWh a month will enjoy a reduction of P54 for December. Households that consume 300 kWh and 600 kWh monthly can also expect decreases of P81 and P108, respectively.

According to Meralco, the decline in the generation charge was due to a reduction in the price of power purchased from the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM).

"WESM prices fell by P2.69 per kWh, from a high of P3.48 per kWh in the October 2011 supply month to P0.80 per kWh," the company said in a statement.

In October, WESM prices rose due to a generation supply constraint brought about by the maintenance shutdown of the Malampaya natural gas pipeline that month.

When the pipeline resumed normal operations in November, power plants relying on Malampaya for fuel were able to produce more power. This helped ease the supply constraint and bring down WESM prices, Meralco explained.

The reduction in WESM prices had offset the increase in charges made by Independent Power Producers (IPPs), whose prices went up by an average of 30 centavos per kWh.

"The First Gas plants (Sta. Rita and San Lorenzo, which started utilizing limited gas in October, already had to run on regularly priced Malampaya gas for the remainder of November. The IPP prices were also affected by the peso's depreciation against the US dollar," Meralco explained.

The distribution utility said it sourced 63 percent of its electricity purchases last month from WESM, 35 percent from IPPs and 92.1 percent from state-owned National Power Corp.

The power distributor again stressed that the generation charge was entirely a pass-through charge and would not accrue or go to Meralco. The cost of electricity sold by generating companies could move from month to month based on factors beyond the company's control, among them fuel prices, the dispatch of IPPs, the foreign exchange rate and WESM prices.

The generation charge, which is the electricity bill's biggest component, averaged about 60 percent of the customer's average monthly power bill. The goes directly to Meralco's power suppliers.

DOE pushes bill to protect vital power infrastructure

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy is pushing for the passage of a law that will declare certain large-scale power facilities as projects of national significance to help spur investor and secure future investments.

According to Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras, a law is needed to ensure that all critical energy projects—such as the construction of oil depots, power plants, transmission towers and lines—will push through.

"You need to correct the situation where a local government unit can hold the whole country hostage to a situation," Almendras yesterday said at the sidelines of the Energy Investment Forum.

"I have an existing problem: I have transmission lines that go through a municipality and that municipality wants to charge grossly exorbitant taxes, and if I don't pay taxes, they will disconnect me or freedom the transmission towers and the wires. So what's going to happen? The whole country's going to suffer. The whole grid's going to collapse if you do something like that," he said.

Resistance

In pushing the law, "the DOE is now exploring various options. I'm hoping a short term solution can happen. We're still studying how to do it because there is a lot of resistance to it," the energy chief added.

The proposed law—which will declare large projects to be of national significance—is expected to iron out inconsistencies in laws and policies, as well as assure the people who will be investing a lot of money in the Philippines over the long term.

This is a crucial point in enticing prospective investors, as the government yesterday presented a menu of investment opportunities in the energy sector, which will require billions worth of investments.

Indigenous resource

Investors can choose to put in their money in indigenous resource exploration, which Almendras said was critical in ensuring the country's energy supply. Under the Philippine Energy Contracting Round, the DOE is offering 15 prospective petroleum blocks and 30 coal areas in the country.

Some P323.5 billion in investments are needed to be infused in the oil and gas sector, covering the 15 contracts for exploration and development of highly prospective areas within the given seven-year period, and another P2.4 billion for the 30 coal areas over a four-year exploration period.

Fresh capital is also sought for power generation projects—whether using traditional fossil fuels or renewable energy sources—as the Philippines needs an additional 30,000 MW for Luzon between now and 2030, another 2,000 MW for the Visayas, and 1,900 MW for Mindanao.

Missionary electrification thrust

Under the renewable energy sector alone, the country will need over P1 trillion in new investments to put up power facilities that can generate close to 10,000 megawatts of clean energy—either from geothermal, hydro, biomass, wind or solar resources.

The private sector is likewise being urged to put up new but smaller power facilities under the government's missionary electrification thrust.

These projects can cater to the electricity requirements of communities living in remote and far-flung areas that are not connected to any of the three main grids.

More opportunities are available in other sectors such as the downstream oil, downstream natural gas, the Sustainable Fuels for Transport program of the government, which is aimed at boosting use of clean fuels for transport; and energy efficiency and conservation.

Amy E. Remo

Republic of the Philippines
ALAMINOS CITY WATER DISTRICT
Poblacion, Alaminos City, Pangasinan 2404
Tel. No. (075) 552-0147 / 552-71-40 Fax (075) 551-01-49

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE

COMPLETE CONSTRUCTION OF ACIND CENTRAL WAREHOUSE AT BRGY. POGO, ALAMINOS CITY

1. The ALAMINOS CITY WATER DISTRICT, through the ACIND 2011 CORPORATE Project intends to apply the sum of P3,470,000.00 as the ABC for the CONSTRUCTION OF ACIND CENTRAL WAREHOUSE AT BRGY. POGO, ALAMINOS CITY. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening.
2. The ALAMINOS CITY WATER DISTRICT now invites bids for the COMPLETE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ACIND CENTRAL WAREHOUSE AT BRGY. POGO, ALAMINOS CITY. Completion of the Project is within SIXTY (60) calendar days from the date stated in the Notice to Proceed. All bidders should have completed, within the last five (5) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (RA 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

   Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and Executive Order No. 245.
4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from ALAMINOS CITY WATER DISTRICT and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount equivalent to 0.1% of ABC in CASH/CHECK. Cashier.
6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before December 21, 2011, 10:00 A.M. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in the BID Documents.

   Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below. LATE BIDS SHALL NOT BE ACCEPTED.
7. Alaminos City Water District reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein, and accept the bid which is most advantageous to the government.
8. For further information, please refer to:

ALAMINOS CITY WATER DISTRICT
ACIND Building,
Gen. Vicente Vito St., Poblacion III,
1404 Alaminos City, Pangasinan
Tel. No. (075) 551-24-90
E-mail: acwd_alaminos@yahoo.com

ENGR. LEO L. CARLOS
BAC - Chairman

(ITB) Dec. 7, 2011

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Pangasinan
Provincial Government
Department of National Defense

INVITATION TO BID
Construction of BCD-400MBC Warehouse

1. The Office of Civil Defense through the DND Bids and Awards Committee (DBAC) invites bids for the Construction of BCD-400MBC Warehouse for the 2nd DISPATCH. (Fire Project), detailed as follows:

Item Description	: Construction of BCD-400MBC Warehouse
Location	: Office of Civil Defense Building 2 Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Funding Source	: DND Quick Response Fund FY 2008 and 2011
Approved Budget for the Contract	: Eighteen Million Seven Hundred Fifty Three Thousand Pesos (P18,753,000.00)
PCAB License Required	: Category "B"
Contract Completion Period	: Two Hundred Seventy (270) Calendar Days

2. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criterion as specified in the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act". Bids received in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) shall be automatically rejected at the bid opening.
3. Interested bidders is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. Foreign bidder may be eligible to participate in the implementation of this project if their country extends reciprocal rights to Filipino contractors, pursuant to Republic Act (RA) 5183 and Executive Order (EO) 245 and its revised IRR of RA 5183.
4. Bidding documents shall be issued upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) to the Cashier's Office of DND, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.
5. The Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the Office of Civil Defense and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.
6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before December 20, 2011, 10:00 A.M. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in the BID Clause 18.

   Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below. LATE BIDS SHALL NOT BE ACCEPTED.
7. The Office of Civil Defense reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.
8. For further information, please refer to:

DND Bids and Awards Committee (Secretariat)
Department Head Wing, DND Building
Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, Philippines 1110
Telefax No. (632) 421-1671
Telephone No. (632) 911-5995 local 3018

(Sgd.) MSGT PATRICK M. VELEZ (MNSA)
Chairman, DND Bids and Awards Committee

(ITB) Dec. 7, 2011

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development
Field Office VIII, Magsaysay Boulevard, Tacloban City
Tel. # (053) 321-2441 to 43 / (053) 321-2574 Fax # (053) 321-2451
E-mail: www.fo8@dswd.gov.ph

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF VARIOUS GOODS AND SERVICES

1. The Department of Social Welfare and Development, Field Office VIII now invites bids for the following projects:

PROJECT TITLE	PDM DESCRIPTION	ABC
1. Procurement of Office Equipment for Purchase	• Six (06) Air-conditioning Units • Two (02) Laptop for DRP and Monitoring • Two (02) Photocopier • Two (02) Printer with 1 scanner and 1 scanner at the side • Two (02) Projector • Two (02) Digital Camera	Php 1,700,000.00
2. Printing and binding of Household Data Record Forms for Validation	Printing and binding of 1,000 pads Household Data Record Forms	Php 100,000.00
3. Procurement of Laptops for Validation	• Six (06) Laptops	Php 270,000.00
	GRAND TOTAL	Php 2,070,000.00

4. Bidders should have completed, within six (6) months from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly, in Section II. Instructions to Bidders.
5. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".
6. Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant reciprocal rights or privileges to Philippine citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and Executive Commonwealth Act 138.
7. Interested bidders may obtain further information from DSWD FO VIII and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
8. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount equivalent to 0.1% of ABC in CASH/CHECK. Cashier.
9. **The DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on the date stated hereunder to familiarize the project title as the Office of the BAC Chairperson which shall be open to all interested parties.

PROJECT TITLE	SCHEDULE
1. Procurement of Office Equipment for Purchase/Delivery	December 14, 2011 at 10:00 A.M., Operations Control Room (OCR)
2. Printing and binding of Household Data Record Forms for Validation/Delivery	December 14, 2011 at 10:00 A.M., Operations Control Room (OCR)
3. Procurement of Laptops for Purchase/Delivery	December 14, 2011 at 10:00 A.M., Operations Control Room (OCR)

10. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before the Bid Opening Schedule. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in the BID Clause 18.
11. Bid opening shall be conducted on the schedule opposite the project title as stated hereinabove at the Operations Control Room (OCR) 2nd Floor, DSWD FO VIII Office Unit. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids shall not be accepted.

PROJECT TITLE	SCHEDULE
1. Procurement of Office Equipments for Delivery/Purchase	December 16, 2011 at 10:00 A.M., Operations Control Room (OCR)
2. Printing and binding of Household Data Record Forms for Delivery/Validation	December 16, 2011 at 10:00 A.M., Operations Control Room (OCR)
3. Procurement of Laptops for Purchase/Delivery	December 16, 2011 at 10:00 A.M., Operations Control Room (OCR)

12. The DSWD reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.
13. For further information, please refer to:

MARILENE L. ADVINCULA
BAC Bid Division Chief
DSWD Field Office VIII
Magsaysay Blvd., Tacloban City
(053) 321-2441
advinculaml@dswd.gov.ph
Fax (053) 321-2451

(Sgd.) VIRGINIA M. KIAMCO
BAC Chairperson / Chief, Operations Division

(ITB) – December 07, 2011

Republic of the Philippines
City of Manila
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The City Government of Manila invites PHILIDEX registered suppliers to apply for the following items:

Item No.	QTY.	Unit of Issue	DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)	Date of Bid Security
1	1,000	Box	Bond Paper, Short	P 450,000.00	12 January 2012
2	1,000	Box	Bond Paper, Long	P 450,000.00	
3	1,000	Box	Bond Paper, Legal	P 450,000.00	
4	1,000	Box	Bond Paper, Long (Colored)	P 450,000.00	
5	1,000	Box	Bond Paper, Short (Colored)	P 450,000.00	
6	1,000	Box	Bond Paper, Legal (Colored)	P 450,000.00	
7	1,000	Box	Carbon Paper, Short	P 450,000.00	
8	1,000	Box	Carbon Paper, Long	P 450,000.00	
9	1,000	Box	Carbon Paper, Legal	P 450,000.00	
10	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short	P 450,000.00	
11	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long	P 450,000.00	
12	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal	P 450,000.00	
13	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored)	P 450,000.00	
14	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored)	P 450,000.00	
15	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored)	P 450,000.00	
16	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Window)	P 450,000.00	
17	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Window)	P 450,000.00	
18	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Window)	P 450,000.00	
19	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
20	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
21	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
22	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
23	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
24	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
25	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
26	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
27	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
28	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
29	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
30	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
31	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
32	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
33	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
34	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
35	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
36	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
37	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
38	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
39	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
40	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
41	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
42	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
43	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
44	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
45	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
46	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
47	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
48	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
49	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
50	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
51	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
52	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
53	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
54	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
55	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
56	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
57	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
58	1,000	Box	Envelope, Short (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
59	1,000	Box	Envelope, Long (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	
60	1,000	Box	Envelope, Legal (Colored Window)	P 450,000.00	

Bids submitted will be delivered on a weekly basis during the duration of the bidding process.

Bidders/end-users will be given a 5-working days of bank withdrawal.

Bidders must submit documentary requirements for eligibility at least 24 hours before the bidding schedule.

For bidding schedule on December 19, 2011 at 2:00 o'clock p.m. at the Committee's Office.

Note: Bidding will be on December 19, 2011, open-door-and-seeing.

Interested bidders are advised to secure the bidding documents at the BAC Secretariat, City Hospital Office complex from weekdays to noon.

Bidders are hereby enjoined to be present during bidding. Absent bidders will be deemed to have waived their rights to participate in the bidding.

The City Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, and to accept such bid as may be advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) ADELAIDA P. ESPINOSA
Secretary

(ITB) – December 07, 2011

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

INSURANCE

Edited text without icon for this...

LOST SAMPLE

Lost ID / Document Number

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TOWNHOUSE

FORT CONDO

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

APARTMENT

ROOM & BOARDING

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

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MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS

PETS

TENNIS EQUIPMENT

WANTED TO BUY

BUY / SELL / TRADING
ROLEX
LOCAL BUYER
CASH ON HAND
Call / Text / Email

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

REMINDER

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Certificate of Stock No. 0-1234 issued by Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc. in the name of Juan Dela Cruz has been lost or destroyed and that the undersigned intends to apply for issuance of a duplicate certificate in lieu thereof.

Juan Dela Cruz
123 Rizal Street, Quezon City

(ITB) Dec. 7, 2011

NOTICE OF LOSS

I, Maria Santos, hereby declare that my Passport No. P1234567A issued on January 15, 2020 has been lost. I intend to apply for a replacement.

(ITB) Dec. 7, 2011

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MONTH OF OVERSEAS FILIPINOS DECEMBER 2011

with the theme:

Overseas Filipinos: Rising to Global Challenges

BACKGROUND

SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL INSTRUMENTS HAVE BEEN PASSED TO RECOGNIZE MIGRANTS AS AGENTS OF GLOBAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCLAIMED DECEMBER 18 EACH YEAR AS INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY ON 4 DECEMBER 2000.

IN THE PHILIPPINES, FORMER PRESIDENT CORAZON C. AQUINO ISSUED PROCLAMATION NO. 370 ON 21 JUNE 1988, INSTITUTIONALIZING THE COMMEMORATION OF THE MONTH OF OVERSEAS FILIPINOS EVERY DECEMBER. FORMER PRESIDENT GLORIA M. ARROYO ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE ROLE OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO COMMUNITIES IN ADVANCING THE NATION'S DEVELOPMENT GOALS BY CREATING THE NAC FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE MOF AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 320 ISSUED IN OCTOBER 2007. THE INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE IS CHAIRED BY THE PHILIPPINE MIGRANTS RIGHTS WATCH, CO-CHAIRED BY THE COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS, WITH MEMBERS AND PARTNERS FROM GOVERNMENT, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY.

FOR THE DECEMBER 2011 CELEBRATIONS, THE IAC HAS LINED UP VARIOUS ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES BENEFITING FILIPINO MIGRANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES, IN LINE WITH THE YEAR'S THEME: 'OVERSEAS FILIPINOS RISING TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES.'

Organized by: Philippine Migrants Rights Watch, Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Labor and Employment, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Department of Tourism, Department of Trade and Industry, Presidential Communications Operations Office, Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Film Development Council of the Philippines, Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, Pag-IBIG Fund, Social Security System, Migrant Forum in Asia, and Philippine Migration Research Network.

HIGHLIGHTS

December Forum
Discussion topics:
- Migration and Climate Change
- The Effects of the 'Arab spring' on Migration

Land Bank of the Philippines Auditorium
Thursday, December 15, 10:00-12:00 p.m.
By invitation only

Migration Advocacy and Media Awards
Recognition of private and public media initiatives that have raised public awareness on Filipino migration issues, advocated the cause of overseas Filipinos &/or promoted a positive image of overseas Filipinos, and focused on related migration and development concerns.

Land Bank of the Philippines Auditorium
Thursday, December 15, 5:00-6:00 p.m.
By invitation only

Cultural Presentation
A cultural performance by the UP Singing Ambassadors, PGH Choirs and Landbank Musikal Ensemble featuring songs and Christmas Carols for overseas Filipinos and their families.

Land Bank of the Philippines Auditorium
Thursday, December 15, 6:00-6:30 p.m.
By invitation only

Clockwise: ENDE
Film showing of the movie 'Ende,' a musical on the experience of a Filipino nanny who decided to work abroad to help her family. The audience will discuss the impact and significance of the movie on migrant families and on the Philippines in general, in the context of migration and development.

Tuesday, December 13, 10:00-12:00 noon
At SM Cinemas except Fairlane, Megamall & Taytay; Rest Open to All

Fun Run
A fun run to raise public awareness on the celebration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos.

Sunday, December 18, 5:00 a.m.
Quezon City Circle
Open to all

For the complete list of programs, events and services during the Month of Overseas Filipinos, please contact (+632) 832-1761 up to 67, ibnggar@dfa.gov.ph or www.cfo.gov.ph

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Her cremation fu-ce-state at Loreto Guadalupe, Makati City until noon of December 8, 2011. Holy mass will also be offered for her at 9:00 a.m. at Chapel 91.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

GERONIMO (GERRY) J. MANZANO

Realtor-ASEAN Veteran

wishes to convey our deepest appreciation to all of you, our relatives and friends, who spent precious time with us, sent us flowers, many cards, gave donations, or in some other way expressed your love, concern and support in celebrating Gerry's coming home to the Creator.

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BUSINESS

BSP seen to hike key rates next quarter

Gov't expects bearish outlook in '12

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has signaled that it may cut key policy rates in the first quarter of 2012, citing expectations that a prolonged crisis in the eurozone may dampen growth prospects for emerging economies like the Philippines.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said last week that the rate of interest to consumer prices could remain benign next year, the central bank would have the flexibility to respond to the impact of the crisis in the West by reducing key rates.

Lower interest rates tend to encourage individuals and enterprises to secure loans, which in turn will help boost consumption and investments.

Tetangco said a pickup in demand for goods and services—as a result of lower interest rates—would not exert too much pressure on inflation, which remained quite manageable.

"In the meantime, as the favorable inflation outlook provides us flexibility, we [BSP] are open to possible easing early next year, especially if our own growth prospects continues to be subdued" Tetangco yesterday told reporters.

The central bank's policy rates, which influence commercial interest rates, currently stand at 4.5 percent for overnight borrowing, and 6.5 percent for overnight lending.

The statistics department reported that annual inflation eased at 4.7 percent in November—well within the government's target ceiling of 5 percent. The BSP expects inflation to stay below the target cap over the next two years.

A prolonged debt crisis in the euro zone—one of the biggest export markets—is expected to restrain growth of incoming countries like the Philippines.

Should the crisis in the West worsen, the ease of borrowing in the international market would rise, thereby increasing expenditures while putting a damper on profits of companies.

According to monetary officials, reducing interest rates is just one way to minimize the impact of Europe's debt problems on the Philippines.

However, they also said that the government should do its part, particularly by accelerating public spending.

The decline in public spending this year resulted in lower-than-expected growth for the Philippines in the first three quarters.

The country grew by a mere 3.6 percent in the first three quarters of 2011. The government later admitted that the official target of 4.5 to 5.5 percent for the full year could no longer be attained.

Government expenditures in January to October this year amounted to P1.395 trillion—down by 5.4 percent from P1.476 trillion in the same period last year. Although the government rushes toward to jumpstart the economy by raising expenditures especially for social services and infrastructure, a drop in spending still exists above.

Budget officials said the decline in public spending was due to efforts of the Department of Budget and Management to streamline spending proposals of agencies in line with the Aquino administration's anti-corruption drive.

But the budget officials said that public spending would pick up by the end of the year. They said the public should expect a "dramatic" increase in government spending in the fourth quarter.

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2nd Place
"Mine Me...Mind Me"
by Mark D. Tolipas
4th Year High School,
Sarangani National High School,
Koronadal City, South Cotabato

3rd Place
"Bantay ng Kapuligan"
by Marino Rose S. Magbanua
4th Year High School,
General Santos City High School,
General Santos

A bright future for southern Mindanao

Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI) believes in the importance of art to young people and to the community. That's why we held the First Regional Art Competition in southern Mindanao last September. An exceptional art competition like this is a canvas for the youth to showcase their talents and pursue their dreams.

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Digos National High School, Annex
Holy Cross Academy of Digos
Matanao Digos National High School

Davao City
Davao City National High School
Philippine Science High School
Philippine Women's College of Davao

General Santos City
Bula National School of Fisheries
Fatima High School
General Santos City High School
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Koronadal Academy
Lamphun National High School
Mabana National High School

Malungon, Sarangani
Malungon Comey National High School

Malungon National High School

Polomolok, South Cotabato
Notre Dame Siamco
College of Polomolok
Polomolok National High School
Rotary III National High School

Tupi, South Cotabato
Tupi National High School

IN THIS WEEKEND'S ROAD TALK

THE highlights of the ongoing Tokyo Motor Show at the Big Sight in Odaiba district in Tokyo, Japan with reports from Joey Arnaiz for Toyota, Charles Bahar for Mitsubishi and Jason Ang for Nissan.

MOTORING

Editor Joey N. Arnaiz

10 auto parts prone to 'price abuse'

By Tess R. Salazar

WHEN YOU buy a car, you're not just buying a car, you are also buying yourself thousands of warning metal, rubber and plastic parts, and no sooner as the sun rises and sets, all, if not most of them, will need fixing or replacement during the life of the vehicle.

Different parts come at different prices, of course. Sometimes, however, we just don't know what the shops ought to charge us for these parts. We might be paying an arm and a leg for a part that should just cost us the hairs on our head. Or we might be buying a cheaper version of a justifiably expensive part, only to regret later on that we didn't get the pricey original (which usually happens when your car cranks out in the middle of a deserted highway in the dead of night). In terms of the worth of your car's major parts, and when you do, the knowledge of all other costs for the other parts should fall nicely into place.

1. Oils and filters. Automotive technologist Alex Lotuac observes that rare (but frequent) are well-cared, relatively dust-free roads can keep their oils good for up to 15,000 km. On the average, though, oils are good for 5,000 to 7,000 kms before requiring replacement.

"Some shops will insist that you change oils every 3,000 to 5,000 km, even if the oil still visibly looks good. Changing oils too soon is wasteful and not environmentally sound. A good quality oil filter that can still filter better than 20 microns will keep your oil clean. **Inks or cheap replacements are the problem,**" said Lotuac.

2. Spark plugs. Original spark plugs have been known to last up to 100,000 km. Compare such durability to cheap **spark, which will literally lose their** spark at the 3,000-km mark. "Regular plugs can last up to 30,000 kms," Lotuac observes. "A good technician can read the plugs, and based on that inspection can make the correct recommendation. So regular plugs can even last longer than imported based on experience and a trained eye," he added, to effect, what Lotuac is saying that by buying substandard or fake spark plugs, you are virtually paying more in the long run. That's already on top of the headaches misfiring spark plugs will cause you as they wreak havoc on your car's fuel efficiencies.

3. Air filters. Despite that pitiful looking air filter after a particularly venturesome drive through a long dusty road, air filters are hardy things which only require frequent inspection and dust blow offs, according to Lotuac. A trained technician can pretty much judge if your car needs to have its air filter replaced.

But beware of taking air filters that have reached the end of the line. By continuing to use dirty or overused air filters, you are paying the price—in terms of fuel inefficiency. Herman Lim of Speedlink says that a clogged air filter can make fuel efficiencies spiral enormously. Glenn Camacho of Project O points to air filters as one of the culprits to bad fuel efficiencies. Auto expert Diana Inita enthusiasts that a dirty air filter can cause the driver to lose **one mile (1.6 km) per gallon** (3.5 liters) while running at a speed of 50 mph (80 kph). "By keeping your air filter clean, you get that extra mile/km," she says.

4. Wheel alignment. Lotuac says that wheel alignment services can become one of the rush-rush of conveyor-ing auto shops. "The flat rate charged for most common wheel alignment is less than an hour since many shops do not have caster or camber adjustment. They may suggest to do these, but may not actually perform the job since there are no adjustments except a toe-in setting and we can on some check," said Lotuac. "If they charge you P1,200, then that means their flat rate is P1,000 but on the other hand the same facility will charge P800 for a tune-up that will also take less than an hour. But cars to perform since most modern cars today are electronic and don't need adjustments, or from a flat axle point of view, wheel alignment is the most common easy money maker," he said.

So, the next time you have your wheels aligned, make sure it's with a shop that actually performs what it guarantees to do. Otherwise, you would have paid for two jobs, but what you actually got was just one.

5. Diesel injection pump calibration. Lotuac observed that this could be another area for some unscrupulous shops to make easy money since the parts and calibration process are expensive, and opens itself to fake or imitation parts with you ending up paying for original parts. These "holes in the wall" calibration centers, he adds, would most likely not even have the correct or appropriate test bench and data to perform the job properly. After spending thousands of pesos, the owner may still find his or her vehicle's engine still behaving erratic, and generally performing poorly. Many times, the only adjustment made has been the setting of the volume screw that controls the amount of diesel injected. But as Lotuac duly reminded it on the test bench.

6. Shock absorbers. For their role in taking direct hits from bad roads (and possibly from bad driving, as well), shock absorbers become top candidates for frequent repairs and changes. Invariably some unscrupulous technicians take advantage of this to make a quick buck, recommending replacements for **still perfectly good shocks.**

"A good technician knows when a shock absorber needs replacement based on its bounce and rebound. Some cars come with stiff settings and others soft, and even different models will behave differently and there are sometimes used in comparison to convince that replacements are necessary," says Lotuac.

7. Clutch service. Some clutches only require adjustments of the pedal free play and travel. Some technicians who take advantage would then recommend clutch disc, pressure plate and release bearing replacement when the only problem is really an adjustment, says Lotuac.

Automotive enthusiast Leslie Sy reminds car owners that in order to maintain repairs for clutches of manual transmission cars, some had driving habits need to be unlearned, as well as avoiding overheating the vehicle, which

TO PARTS, B4.5

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New big boy on the block: The Chevy Traverse

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sorilla-Mendoza

THE 2012 Traverse, Chevrolet's full-size luxury crossover, seats 8 comfortably.

BMOL's Imelda Mangahas-Soriano, Rt Zeus Abrera, Boss Hi-speaker audio system

IF YOU'VE never heard of the Chevrolet Traverse, welcome to the club. The Traverse is a new entrant to General Motors' fleet of large car lineup (SUVs with three rows of seats that can accommodate seven or eight passengers). Built on the GM Lambda platform that underpins the Buick Enclave and GMC Acadia, the Traverse debuted at the Chicago International Auto Show in 2008, the year that the Chevrolet Uplander three-row minivan and Chevrolet Trailblazer five-seater SUV the GMC family ran, were phased out. Both the Uplander and Trailblazer had been getting poor reviews, especially from Consumer Reports, so the Traverse may have been rolled out to save the day for Chevrolet in the heavily competitive large SUV/crossover market.

Has the Traverse succeeded? Let's find out more about it. The Crossover Car Category has (TC-CU), the exclusive importer and distributor of Chevrolet vehicles and parts in the Philippines, launched the 2012 Traverse in Manila in the last week of October 2011. The 2012 Traverse looks exactly the same as the original, which is to say that it looks as massive and solid as a big American SUV/crossover should. New to the Suburban, the Traverse is Chevrolet's biggest SUV and, as such, is the first vehicle to be offered in the Philippines with a 3.6-liter V6 engine. Other vehicles in the Chevrolet lineup are powered by smaller engines.

Sleek

All three packaged in an attractive, sleekly designed body with Chevy's signature dual-port grill and angular tail lights, ride on 20-inch machined aluminum wheels. The Traverse is 5,212 millimeters long, 1,948 millimeters wide, 1,710 millimeters high, and has a 3,070-millimeter wheelbase. Its curb weight is 2,100 kilograms. The Traverse has a ground clearance of 172 millimeters and a towing capacity of 1,800 kilograms.

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Turn your heads to the Bavarian babies

Text and photos by Tessa R. Salazar

HERE'S THE one-two-three punch: The 1 series has become the 22nd most popular (BMW) brand after the 1 Series. Easy to remember, huh? Let's add a little jab to that: The 1 Series has been top-of-mind for BMW since '04.

Since its inception, the BMW 1 Series has redefined the hotly contested compact class, sweeping the market's attention with its aggressive looks and sophisticated technology. As the "BMW" book by Rainer W. Schlegelmilch et al. states, the 1 Series has "a long wheelbase, short overhangs and no high beltli. Instead a car that, with a drag coefficient of 0.30, is aerodynamically a sportsman."

The all-new BMW 1 series has just recently been launched in the Philippines by official distributor Asian Carmakers. This writer, along with a couple of other lucky chaps in the local motoring media, had the chance to test drive this car in Germany last months ago. We experienced firsthand how BMW designers and engineers had addressed some of the fundamental concerns arising from the previous 1 Series, such as space, driver and ride quality. And he good measure, BMW also threw in a few extra: The new 1 Series now also comes less a coupe.

Initially, three variants have been introduced for the Philippine market: The BMW 116i, BMW 118d Urban Line and BMW 118d Sport Line. This 1 Series is the first model to be offered with the BMW Sport Line and BMW Urban Line.

With this, ACC says this 2nd generation 1 Series widening its lead even more to the entry-level premium cars in the country. Usually its fiercest competitors are the Audi A3 and the Mercedes Benz A-Class). But ACC, however, chose to no competition, as it sees the 1 Series, which accounts for 15 percent of the company's entire sales, as having it over in class in all possible ways.

During the launch, ACC president Mariner Crutchfield Jreos said: "The premium compact BMW 1 Series is already synonymous with driving pleasure. Now, the all-new BMW 1 Series strikes a balance of sheer engine and suspension technology, further improvements in fuel efficiency, significantly more space and an innovative range of features and equipment."

Glen Chong, ACC's sales and marketing executive director, said that the term "entry-level" may no longer be relevant with the all-New 1 Series, which is just accurate.

"Before, people used to say, this is the most affordable, but (not) the 'latest and the greatest.' But this one, you get the most premium ecosystem to the 2-series (The new 1.6i engine), better horsepower but better fuel consumption. The 118d has better horsepower than the previous one; it's a two-liter (engine) with better fuel consumption."

Aside from that, what comes as standard on the 1 Series are effective dynamics, cruise control with brake (for entry-level models), 6-drive, 6-speed automatic transmission, brake regeneration system, optimum shift indicator, and eco pro mode. Irony was prompted to quip to the vernacular: "Sobrang sulit."

So, how "sulit" is "sulit"? Packed with all new features, the 116i goes for P1,290,000. Add P200,000 and you get the prestigious Line: the 116d Urban Line (P1,490,000). Add another P200,000 and you get the 116d Sport Line (P1,690,000).

Die-hard fans of BMW, obviously want to get their hands on the All-New 1 Series first with so many features, the new 1 Series offers so many reasons for the reader. Here are some of them:

• Multiple driving modes. In our test drive in Germany through Südlbe (at Adac Safety Driving Center) and Berlin, the experience gave us the opportunity to finally try around with the four driver modes: Sport, Sport Plus, Comfort and Eco Pro. The unanimous verdict had been that this, indeed, is a technically endowed car, and that the term "entry-level" is a misnomer, indeed.

• The BMW EfficientDynamics technologies, fitted as standard, include Brake Energy Regeneration and electromechanical servo-assisted steering, and rises with enhanced rolling resistance.

• The Automatic start/stop function comes as standard with the automatic transmission. Using the driving experience controls, drivers can activate ECO PRO mode, which is designed to facilitate a particularly economical driving style. The start/stop technology does take a while to get used to, what with the awareness that the car's engine "dies" on you during idling times or at stoplights. That feeling of unease is relieved as soon as the foot steps on the gas pedal and the engine is restarted.

The start/stop technology also readjusts the power needs of the car, such as the air-conditioning system. The special starter system's layout has also been redesigned to accommodate the substantially increased number of times the starter system would be activated by the start/stop technology. BMW engineers have also re-thought the anti-battery technology, virtually replacing this with a special battery that holds more powerful energy.

• The 8-speed automatic transmission is standard—the only car in the compact segment to offer this. This makes it possible for the car to engage/disengage gears faster and smoother, with acceleration to feel effortless.

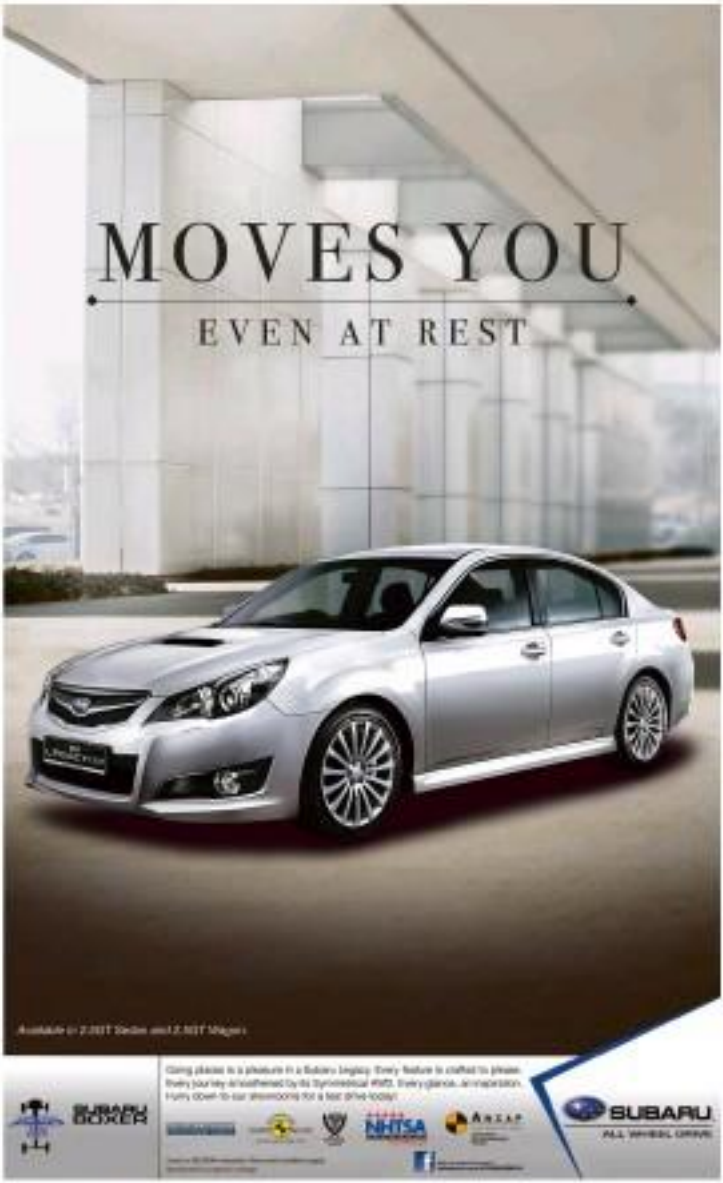
• The new gasoline and diesel engines with the BMW TwinPower Turbo technology is featured. Its Twin-Power Turbo technology has been designed by its engineers to combine sporty gasoline with exceptionally low fuel consumption and emissions. Combined-cycle fuel consumption has been reduced to between 4.5 and 4.6 liters per 100 km, with CO2 emissions of 119 to 122 grams per km, according to EU test figures).

• The subtle differences between two cars create a lot 'inspirational' cues such as the All-New 1 Series offer those little surprises, such as the Lines concept, which offer differences and distinctions for its Sport and Urban variants), and trim identifying touches to its interior and highlights.

• Roomier than its predecessor. The All-New BMW 1 Series is longer, wider, has more legroom, longer wheelbase and bigger luggage compartment.

The real jist about the new 1 Series car, only be found by driving it, though. It's the One to make BMW believers of us all.

The all-new BMW 1 Series grows a bit, and gets all the attention



Revolution not evolution

Kia throws 4th gen Rio into the battle of sub-compact sedans

NOTE: Photos are the right-hand drive Australian edition

By Joey Arcano

HAVE YOU been with Australian chef Maggie Beewer after a sumptuous dinner inside one of four wineries at the Barossa Valley in South Australia, the guests didn't have to be told what their host Kia Motors has got something cooking.

As Beewer engaged the gentlemen in court and the ladies clad in gowns in a story-telling of not to on her fascination with the sleepy town dozing its ens-emble muscle behind vast vineyards, it became a little difficult for the guests to stay with her. The small silvery car behind Beewer was becoming quite a distraction.

Beewer's talk segued into the evening's main activity: the introduction of that bride car which is the basis for promotion Kia Rio.

While the dinner was for the formal getting to-know-you stuff with the emcees and the interiors, the next day was to be the actual engagement with the Rio through the scenery roads of Barossa Valley.

Even before the excited test drivers from Asia could lay their hands on the first of Rios, they were given a primer on this newest vehicle to come out of the Kia factory which officials believe will lead people to take a second, more serious look at the brand.

"The fourth generation Kia Rio is not an evolution from its predecessor, it's a revolution!" says Mark Reid of Kia Motors Australia.

Reid's statement, of course, shouldn't be taken as a boast.

The Rio has transformed from just being the fuel-efficient car that it was designed to something of outstanding appeal, now with strong features including stopped-car distance to be carried by the hot-selling Sportage like its-mandate body.

There is a high level challenge that went with producing the new version of the Rio especially since it is geared to lead Kia's campaign to achieve more than 2.5 million units in sales around the world by the end of 2011.

Massimo Frascella, the lead designer for Rio who also did the sketches for the Sportage, flew all the way from his Calfornia base to the Australian joint to confirm that he wasn't seeing less-than creating a special identity for the new Rio. The result of Frascella's careful, in-tricate design produced a car worth reversing as a brand champion.

"The Rio introduced Kia to many Australians and its role as ambassador cannot be overstated enough. It has always been successful and with this new incarnation we have a car which is extremely attractive with a fresh feeling of sportiness," says Kia Motors Australia president and CEO MK Kim.

Kim was close to claiming the title as a "people's car" for the Rio in his speech for he would rather let the numbers (in sales) in the coming months affirm the first batch of Rios result from international destinations, the Philippines included, prove it.

According to Sieping Gariano, marketing manager of Columbian Autocars Corp. which handles the distribution of Kia in PH, the 5-door Hatchback will arrive first in the first quarter of 2012.

With the 1.4L Gamma GDI gasoline engine fitted to both the mid-range S and top of the range SX Rio models, the resource-competent in the light passenger vehicle segment is going to come up with a nearby challenge on fuel efficiency and should hit around 15 kms per liter given the proper driving attitude.

There will be plenty of other features that will merit a second look for the Rio. Safety is ensured with six airbags and electronic stability control not to mention the ABS (anti-lock brakes), EBD (electronic brake force distribution) and EBA (emergency brake assist) systems.

Electronic features are loaded into the small wonder through the Bluetooth connectivity that safeguards the passengers of the vehicle. Aside from the LED daytime running lights and 17-inch alloy wheels that enhance the good looks of the Rio, the entertainment system can't be outdid as with Bluetooth connectivity a radio CD player with MP3 compatibility, AUX and USB connectors that can be manipulated from the steering wheel.

The Rio fits clutch is sure to carry a price tag of P820,000. Definitely not fuel for a small car but can do wonders.

ACCORD Sariano (center), marketing head of Columbian Autocars Corp., with Kia designers Massimo Frascella (left) and Kia Motors Australia president and CEO MK Kim beside the new Kia Rio

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Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

LIFESTYLE Parenting

Raising your kids in the time of Facebook

The wildly popular social-networking site has changed the world in a lot of ways. Has it changed your parenting style, too?

By Pero Punter

"FACEBOOK HAS changed our social DNA," Time magazine declared. And we can't deny it. Mark Zuckerberg's social-networking site has changed the world in a lot of ways—the way people communicate, the way they stay in touch with friends, what they choose to share and keep to themselves. We wondered—has it changed the way people raise their kids, too?

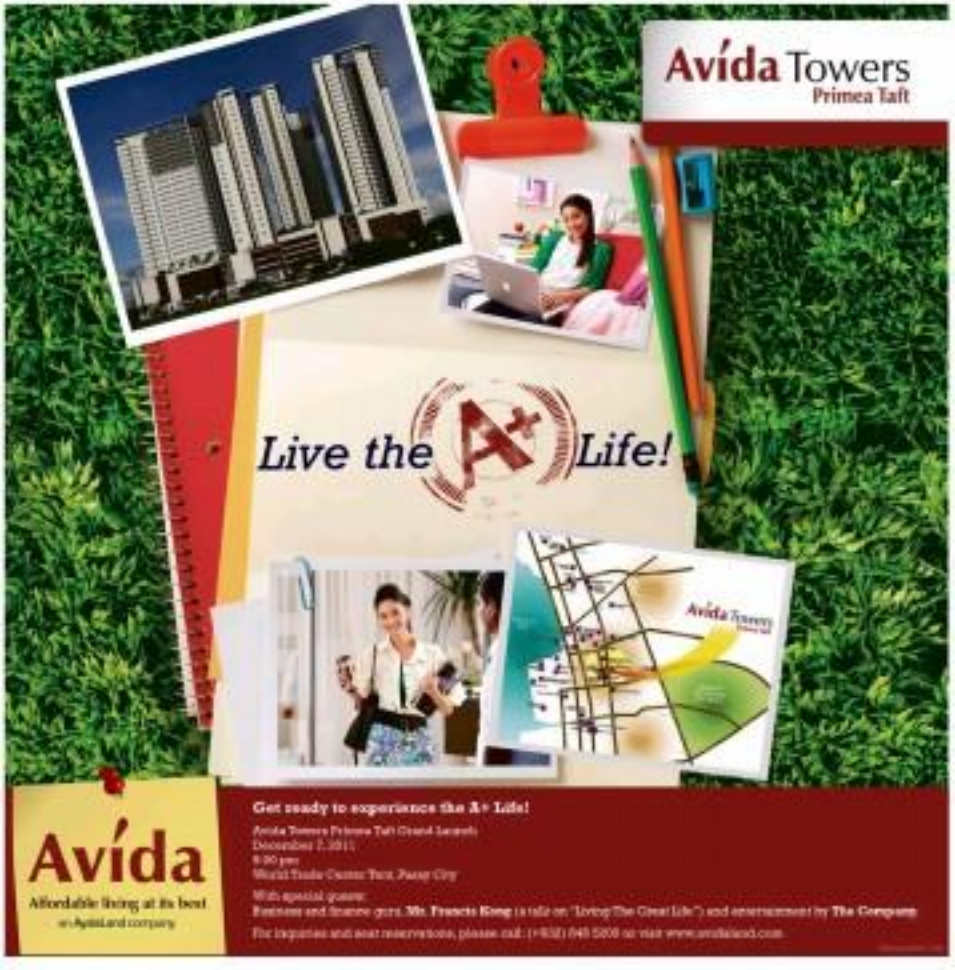
We asked parents and here's what they had to say:

"Parenting in the time of Facebook definitely has its pros and cons. While it's easy to get resources and information on parenting and child rearing, the challenge is learning how to filter the information. Facebook is also a venue for moms and dads to be virtual stage parents, posting pictures and stories of the latest milestones of their kids.

"In all parents are competitive when it comes to their kids [even when they don't admit it, haha], there is this tendency to compare and sometimes experience how the little ones. I am guilty of this sometimes as I often have to remind myself to relax and enjoy each day with Amy." —Rosanne, mama of one

"I always bring my phone to school my little monsters do something new, I can document it and upload to Facebook. I make sure Cuevas (like my eyes) all there. I'm always with them." —Michelle, mama of two

"I stalk my daughters, [whether FACEBOOK IT



The kids speak up

We asked how they feel about their parents and Facebook, and they had a lot to say

Raising your kids in the time

Easy, inexpens
to brighten up your k

Challenges of foster parenting –

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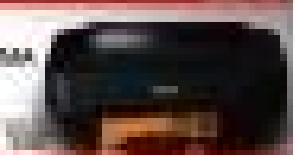
ids' Christmas



A comparative study has revealed that foster care is much better than institutional care not only in terms of costs but also in the quality of child nurturance

DIRECTOR Myla del Rosario with kids

Challenges of foster parenting

By Mara Elizabeth Montealegre
Contributor

"NO, NO, NO... he's not my adopted child," highly driven businesswoman Marilyn "Mallie" del Blanco was quick to say to correct her outsider friends who were obviously intrigued by the new 7-year-old who declared boy with her: "This is Joshua, my foster child," she announced.

"Oh, but fostering is not adopting," Del Blanco clarified.

Although adopting and fostering are similar in the aspect of rearing a child as your own, fostering is only temporary. A foster child may stay in a home for a short term of one week up to six months (usually while awaiting adoption placement) or a long-term period of six months to almost a year for reasons relative to the best interest of the child.

Fostering is defined as a planned period of substitute family care for a child when the biological family cannot care for him or her due to death, illness, imprisonment, abandonment, neglect or war.

The Parenting Foundation of the Philippines, Inc. (PFPI) is an organization engaged in fostering. It's accredited by Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Executive director and psychologist Maria Paz "Pazie" G. de Guzman said she strongly believes in the right of the child to grow up in a family. Many abandoned or abused children are often placed in a residential facility, which may result in the child's getting institutionalized attention, care, guidance and support due to the huge number of children in the facility she explained.

A comparative study has revealed that foster care is much better than institutional care not only in terms of costs but in the quality of child nurturance as well. The child may also enjoy a "sense of family" or belonging in a foster care program.

Full responsibility

"I put Joshua at 6½ years and he will be turning 8 in November," Del Blanco said. Already with two grown-up children and a widowed for her daughter named Sandie, Del Blanco said she is very hands-on when it comes to Joshua.

"It is full responsibility especially now that Joshua is of school age," she said. "When I first got him, wala siyang alam. Puro Tagalog, hindi siya talking much. My grandson naman, he is all English. Ayun, children that they are, they learn so fast and now, they're the closest of friends."

Del Blanco said Joshua tends to hang around her all the time to which she would jokingly say, "I think he knows who holds the money... or who makes the decisions at home. But seriously, I guess Joshua simply wants to belong. Siyempre, nurture-giving insecurities."

Her insecurities might have worsened when what he went through before Del Blanco came into his life. He was just a baby when a woman pretending to be his mother left him to the care of religious sisters. Jillar was really his father's new girlfriend.

When Joshua was becoming a toddler, and no sign of anyone ever returning for him, the sisters decided to transfer him to an orphanage where he could be better taken care of. It was only a little more than a year ago through the help of PFP that he entered to Del Blanco's home as a foster child.

Fostering vs adoption

Del Blanco is aware that while fostering is less of a hassle than adoption when it comes to certain legalities, she still must be ready physically, emotional, financially and mentally to carry out the task of parenting.

Fostering is not a walk in the park. Del Blanco must deal with the challenges of motherhood/all care again. She will have to worry when Joshua contracts a fever or picks a fight in school. She will have to patiently and lovingly teach and explain to Joshua the consequences of bad behavior... and how doing a good deed stops in reward while behaving badly is punished.

Best option

PFP guides foster parents through positively nurturing interaction on parenting. De Guzman said family is still the best option to Joshua.

CHALLENGES C2

LIFESTYLE Home & Entertaining

Nothing spells 'Christmas' like gingerbread cookies

Story on page D2

Moms who rock, kids who rule

LUXE home stars Wi-IT partners Kaye Tinga and Andy Vasquez-Prada

AEB Fredda Tinga and officiating priest, Fr. Enrique Belmonte

Maricris Sangrenis and husband Nassir Vasquez-Prada

YCIAR Cuerdo, Enrique Vasquez-Prada

Warm welcome for new luxe home store

APRIL N Bankil, Yvonne Mauricio, Charlene Escaler

ANTHONY Dy, Cecilia Tinga Klemzon, Meridith Blanquet

B. CHAN Shelbi, Lolli-Girls Hannibalsen

BARONESS Eleonora de Strobel d'Prada e Campofigno

STORES Specialists Inc. executive vice president Anton Huang, Singapore-based international businessman Mario Lopez, Swarovski Singapore regional distribution manager for MEEAP and Middle East Chris Hall

MAGGIE Wilson Consunji and husband Victor Consunji

ARMAND de Rosario and Georgia Schulz-de Rosario

RITA Avila, Mauricio Soc owners Nadine and Nadine Macam, Lovely Rivera

LEADING the ribbon cutting are Nasir Nassrn, San Juan Vice Mayor Francis Zamora, San Juan Mayor Guia G. Gomez, Ghosh Sarita, Melissa Mendez, Jessa Zaragoza and Ara Mina.

PNRC communications department manager Tess Ortigas, PNRC zone corps manager Rubin Ananda, director of PNRC Food Generation Department Annaliey Rosario, PNRC volunteer services manager Arlyn Banks, Jamille Poblador

LUCAS Ramos, Neil Mair, Nico Air

PHILIPPINE Tatler editor in chief Anton San Diego, Maria Lopez, mgt. Swarovski regional distribution manager for MEEAP and Middle East Chris Hall, Robin Morales, Mon Esguerra, Phoebe Barba-Barile, Olivier Yoan

JOHN Wilkenmink, Eric Christian Schlebacher

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen

powered by PINOY PEARC LIVING

THE FULL BROOK ruling is a long-deserved nod to artisanal luck and success in very modest amounts: diadelings, and what better time to inaugurate a socialite home decor shop than now.

W-IT, a luxe home store that involves the collaboration between designers Amily Vasquez-Prada and Kaye Tinga. And a home blessing by Fr. Enrique Belmonte.

The shop, according to Prada, is home out of the "desire to help Filipinos learn the basics of customizing luxury and elegance for the home through furniture and home furnishings they can mix and match."

Customers can choose from a showcase of the best from the East and the West with pieces that are made from world-class materials and boasting of ingenious designs.

Andy's love for interior design started at an early age. His mother, Mari Ore Sangrenis, inspired him to take up interior design at the Philippine School for Interior Design. He later took up business studies at Central St. Martins College of Art and Design in London. He had put up his own trading company before joining the fashion's home division as creative in 2004.

His partnership with multitalented Kaye T, the director of social enterprise, means "that W-IT also aims to boost the value of social responsibility by creating fun in unique ways to fair trade principles and helps local communities of furniture makers," he said.

For your Christmas shopping, check out W-IT. It's at 2267 La Fuerza Compound along Chino Roces (formerly Pasong Tamo) in Makati.

Swarovski dazzlers

Swarovski dazzled with its Winter 2011 Collection, which was presented at Bonifacio Galleria. A collaboration with the Philippine Tatler, "Swarovski Wings of Fantasy" featured this collection as well as a photo exhibit featuring 10 of Manila's beautiful faces wearing the Swarovski Heritage Catwalk collection, naturally-more.

The photo exhibit showed us works of our top photographers capturing the sparkling luminosity of 10 selected faces as wearing the new Swarovski collection.

Included in the awesome collection are the Dynasty Statement Fan Bag, Montagne bracelet and necklace and Orsay Sport Ultra and Statuario Black, both in white.

But any personal shoppers are the simple but classy necklace and matching pendant earrings, the gorgeous necklace and the Pure bangle. Absolutely gorgeous, pulang-pula.

Leading the successful event were Inchan's GSP Anton Huang, Tatler editor in chief Anton San Diego and Swarovski's tall and dashing Chris Hall, and Maria Lopez.

There was a special silent auction of some pieces in the collection. Beneficiary was the Philippine National Red Cross.

Dazzling Swarovski continues to exude magic and grace with its sophistication.

ATHALY Anton del Rosario and girlfriend Samantha Richelle with Armand del Rosario

MELISTEEN actress Carmen Soo

MOLEEN and Bobby de Rosario

ABEL Aldaw and Reese Sor Vito Governor Victor Sandoval

NICY Hocson, Sally Tutt

Dining at Nac

It was out of my driving zone, but our meals at exemption and even in the opening of Saci Condor food and Dessert Bar at Fat Square Bldg. in punta Servicilla, San Juan.

The red-carpet launch was hosted by TV's Tim Yap and attended by celebrities and hot namedroppables, such as San Juan Mayor Guia Gomez, Rep. JV Ejercito and Vice Mayor Francis Zamora.

Asian Grocer, chef Ed Quimson stirring up with an excellent menu—junior crab cakes, tuna spring roll, beef calderete lasagna, slow-roast pork belly and various pastas. Cebu's popular namedroppable Manny O' Wines were served together with calorific but yummy desserts to get everyone's adrenaline and weight up, ahhh-pace.

"We offer food, to be shared and enjoyed with good company," said Nadine Nassrn, GM of Saci. "The homey atmosphere and attentive service at Saci will allow our diners to sample a variety of creative dishes in a light snack or entire meal at very affordable prices."

She added that "Saci will serve wholesome lunch, gourmet-style snacks, expert dinner plus a wide selection of cocktails and award-winning international wines."

Above info I was scare facebook.com/saci.comfortfood, or call 726-7886.

STORES Specialists Inc. executive vice president Anton Huang, Singapore-based international businessman Mario Lopez, Swarovski Singapore regional distribution manager for MEEAP and Middle East Chris Hall

Nothing spells 'Christmas' like gingerbread cookies

Here's an easy way to prepare this classic treat

Anton Barredo and Marissa Lopa

DO-IT-YOURSELF

THE SEASON of Christmas always brings back childhood memories of toys and gifts, all aglow with vivid colors of red, green and gold.

Among the traditional images are gingerbread cookies. No other cookie spells Christmas more than gingerbread. Here is a festive and fun Christmas table arrangement inspired by the classic treats. This table centerpiece will certainly amuse children and adults this Christmas.

Gather one and all to bake and decorate gingerbread cookies. While they are baking, set up a garland in the center of your table. Put red, green and gold balls around the branches and add some pine cones. You can add ribbons if you want. When the cookies are good and ready, you can simply position and rest them between the bubbles of the garland and around the balls and pine cones.

Your Christmas table will certainly set the mood for a happy holiday feast that everyone will enjoy.

Gingerbread cookies

Cookies:

- 9 cups sifted all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup baking soda
- ½ c unsalted butter at room temperature, no it's soft
- ½ c brown sugar
- 1 tbsp ground ginger
- 1 tbsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground cloves
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp finely ground black pepper
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup dark molasses

Royal icing:

- 1 egg white
- ½ tsp lemon juice
- 1½ cup confectioners sugar

In a large bowl sift together flour, baking soda and spices; set aside.

In an electric mixer fitted with a paddle, add the butter and mix until creamy. Add the sugar and beat until fluffy. Mix in the eggs and molasses. Slowly add the flour mixture and combine at low speed. Divide the dough in thirds, wrap each of them in plastic. Chill for at least one hour, or overnight if you have time.

Before rolling out for the moment sit in room temperature for 5-10 minutes. If after refrigerating the dough feels too soft to roll out, work in a little more flour.

Heat oven to 350°. Place a third of the dough on a large piece of lightly floured parchment paper or wax paper. Using a rolling pin, roll dough 1/4 inch thick.

Refrigerate again for 5-10 minutes to make it easier to cut out the cookies. Use either a cookie cutter or place a stencil over the dough and use a knife to cut out desired shapes. Dress raisins, chocolate chips or candy pieces in the center of each cookie if desired for "buttons."

Transfer to ungreased baking sheets. Bake until crisp but not darkened, 8-10 minutes. Remove from oven. Let sit a few minutes and then use a metal spatula to transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool completely. Decorate as desired.

Makes 10-3 inch long cookies

Royal icing

The traditional way to make royal icing is to beat egg whites and lemon juice together, adding the powdered sugar until the mixture holds still peaks. With modern concerns about salmonella from raw eggs, you can either use powdered egg whites or heat the egg whites first to kill any bacteria.

With the heating method, mix the egg white and lemon juice with a third of the sugar, heat in a microwave until the mixture's temperature is 160°F. Then remove from microwave, and beat in the remaining sugar until it still peaks form. Using the powdered egg whites method, combine 2 tbsp egg white powder with 2 tbsp water. Proceed as you would otherwise. (Raw egg white alternatives from the 2006 "Joy of Cooking")

If the icing is too runny, add more powdered sugar until you get the desired consistency. Fill a piping bag with the icing to pipe out into different shapes. (Or use a plastic sandwich bag, with the zip of one corner of the bag cut off.) Keep the icing covered while you work with it so it will dry out.

HOLIDAY gingerbread cookies. Right: Your Christmas table will certainly set the mood for a happy holiday feast with red, green and gold balls at the center.

Bacolod hosts nat'l confab on archives, records management

THE NATIONAL Commission for Culture and the Arts, with the Diocese of San Agustin-Bacolod, will host the 2nd National Archives Congress on Dec. 5-9 at the DSA-B Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, Bacolod City, Negros Occidental. Fr. Randel Redoña, OSA, program director of the congress, said the meeting seeks to professionalize further archiving and records management. To deliver the keynote speech is University of Santo Tomas archivist Reginaldo Jose, also NCCA commissioner and head of the NCCA's National Committee on Archives. Other speakers include Jian Wang, a member of China's National Documentation Standardization Technical Committee, and Victorino Mayoko, executive director of the Philippines Archivists Association. For more information, call (0917) 3078782, e-mail info@ncca.edu.ph, visit www.ncca.edu.ph.

Centris Walk

Centris Walk at Eton Centris is in Quezon Avenue, Quezon City features dishes like Kiddie Carousel, Kiddie Train, Bungee Fun, Wisemenheads and Kiddie Wheels, plus Lane Blaze, a three-lane foam bag arena. Dining options include Dan Ryan's Chicago Grill, Ahca, Pho Hoa, Jollibee, Wang Wang, My Thai, The Pancake House, Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, Tutti Frutti, Yang Chow Restaurant & Tea House, Jack's Grill and soon to open Choi Garden, The Food Bowl Night Market is open 4 p.m.-12 midnight daily; 6 a.m.-2 p.m. Sundays; and 6-11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Also check out the Eskwa weekend market. Call 8982888, visit www.etoncentris.com.

Sun 'unli' mobile internet

Sun Cellular's Load+ are available for prepaid and postpaid subscribers at these packages: (1) for three hours mobile internet valid for one day at P35, (2) for one-day unlimited mobile internet at P50, (3) for three-day unlimited mobile internet at P100, (4) for seven-day unlimited mobile internet at P200, (5) for 30 days of unlimited mobile internet at P500. Convert your regular load to the Load by texting Load type (50, 100, 250 or 500) to 241. Activate your Sun SIM and inserted "LOAD" feature by texting ACTIVATE to 2300. To find Call 108 using your Sun mobile phone or 3868000. Visit www.suncellular.com.ph.

AZKALS football man's Phil and Jamie Youngbuckand greet Kenny Rogers (RH) Hall of Kids's Honey Roast Chicken lunch. The Honey Roast Chicken comes with side dishes like Garlic Parmesan Green Beans, Turnip Salad, Sour Cream and Chives Potatoes, Apple Ogito. The Youngbuckands will visit Kenny Rogers in Robinsons Place Manila, Dec. 9 and Shaw-na, Dec. 16, 10 a.m.-12 noon. Visit www.kennys.com.ph

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CO-PRESENTOR:

Make the most of outdoor holiday entertaining

THE COOL December air makes outdoor entertaining a delightful experience. And with holiday get-togethers on the upswing, treat your family and friends to an outdoor gathering in your patio with furniture sets from ACE Hardware.

Crafted to look very much like exquisite rattan furniture but built with outdoor-ready materials, these are great for light brunches, intimate dinners and al fresco get-togethers with friends. Some sets come with parasols to protect you from light showers, as seen from these patio sets displayed at Chateau Hyson 3M Residence Clubhouse in Ronson.

If you are hosting a family reunion, you can have bigger gatherings with ACE Hard-ware's heavy duty gazebo come tent that also folding banquet tables. You can also add LED Christmas lights to make your gathering more festive.

And while shopping for your outdoor furniture at ACE Hardware and ACE Hobbes stores, check out their holiday promotion and get a chance to win one of 100 16-gig iPad2 units with Wifi. You can also double your chances of winning when you use your 3M Advantage, Prestige and BDO Rewards Cards.

ACE Hardware stores are at: all 3M branches, Megacenter Mall, Cubaoexpress; 3M Hypermarket, Makati; 3M furniture, Kamuningan, Cagayan de Oro; CDO Gaisano. These items are also available at ACE Builders stores at SM City South Edsa, SM City Fairview and 3M City Pampanga.

Visit www.acehardware.ph.

GAZEBO tent and banquet table with table linen from Homeworld and folding chair and lights from ACE Hardware

NEAT elegant outdoor dinner sets like this Monaco round four-seater garden set with accents from Homeworld

RATTAN-INSPIRED Columbus four-seater, Christina bulb from ACE Hardware and table top accessories from Homeworld

TULIP-INSPIRED patio set sets the mood for gatherings. Flower pots and outdoor lighting from ACE Hardware and wine glasses from SM Homeworld

Think well before you give this Christmas

Before recycling, remember this: each gift that bears your name, meaning it is from you, is an extension of you

MARIEN CHRISTMAS lists can be both a daunting task, as they can tend to grow longer every year.

You must now people who have influenced your life in the past year, and you always add them to your list.

Again, just another friendly reminder about the gifts you give. Before recycling, remember this: each gift that bears your name, meaning it is from you, is an extension of you. So, as you give gifts to those who matter to you most, such as family and close friends, so think of something that best represents who you are.

Liz S. Bernardo

MODERN MANNERS

A gift is a reminder of who you are, and you are giving part of yourself to someone not because you need to, but because you want to. Here it is simply saying, 'thank you' for being a part of your life the past year. It need not be expensive; it just needs to represent you.

If I was giving gifts and love receiving them, like everyone else, for this holiday season, make your gifts a little more meaningful by choosing a special gift for special people that have positively impacted your life.

So before you think of recycling yet another fruitcake, give it a thought. My mom is the only person I know who loves fruitcake and secretly looks forward to it every Christmas. And I think before you decide to send food of any kind, unless you have lovingly made it yourself or it is truly a specialty item.

While you all a happy sensitive shopping adventure; enjoy it rather than looking at it as a task. You will be led to the perfect gift for those that matter to you most.

E-mail the author at modernmanners.qa@gmail.com.

Of airports and airplanes

THE CONSUMER
Linda B. Bolalin

It's debatable whether NAIA is the worst. But its personnel and operations are certainly the most stupid

I FLEW TO Puerto Princesa City last week. I was wearing sunglasses as I made my way to the plane when my flight was called.

As I approached the gate, a member of the Philippines Airlines ground crew asked me to remove my glasses and stand on one for a few seconds. My travelling companion asked what it was for. I had absolutely no idea!

What did she expect to see behind the glasses? Since she had not seen me before, how would she know I was me? It would have been understandable if she wanted to compare my passport photograph with the real person. But all she had was one end of my boarding pass.

It reminded me of a letter from Tony Quiroz, entertainment lawyer and Kumot Magazine Awards selection Team "Silver" that one participant was labeled the worst in the world. If they called it the most stupid, he would have no objection.

They must note the vehicle owner's clock, with guards guarding briefly inside the vehicle and the luggage compartment. He does not think they really know what they should be looking for. The exercise reminds me of a drunken Bert Marlow's joke about the "magic wand," a stick that instantly pinpointed in shopping malls one to check bags and Lagos. "The stick will not tell if not a bomb and may even cause it to explode.

And there's the terminal fee. I have been to countries much smaller than ours and do not remember paying a terminal fee. If they do collect it, the amount is bundled with the price of the ticket so you do not notice. In the past, when I was invited to cover international conferences, sponsors would always apologize that they could not pay for the terminal fee.

Every time someone points out inconvenience, rather the lack of it in Other airports have buses and trains. At least now, there are yellow taxis. They are more expensive than ordinary taxis but they are cleaner and they smell better. The drivers look nicer, too.

Based on what other things, cite, but I would like to add the oddity of the so-called Customs green lane. In every country I have been to, the green lane means, if you have nothing to declare, you exit the airport without going through luggage check, unless your luck-neglect-ance airlines have this quality inducement about you.

But here the only way you can exit quickly the green lane is if somebody behind you has more stuff. Then the customs person will make you feel like you are preventing him/her from dealing with more "travelling" things.

Budget airline woes

A reader who asks not to be identified wishes to bring to the attention of Jetstar airline's management the unhappy experience he and other passengers had when they returned from a trip to New Zealand. He said the experience really taught them the perils and realities of low-cost travel.

He said, "Many passengers on the Sept. 20 flight from Auckland arrived at dawn only to find out that their bags were offloaded during the long delayed connections in Singapore."

Several passengers, he said, had to go back to their provinces without their bags. And the Jetstar people told them they should claim the bags personally at NAIA. He got his bag almost a week later "with a few things smashed and shoeshines inclined."

But accidently turning couple from Iloilo waited for theirs for two weeks. The airline also refused they collect it from the city's airport, about three hours away from their remote village.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 1998 Olivia Road Ext., cor. Maceda and Regor Sts., 1204 Makati City; fax 897-6793-94; or e-mail lbolalin@inquirer.com.ph.

GERRY'S GRILL IN QATAR

Gerry Ayalan (second from right), president and chief executive officer of Pizza Pacific Grill Inc. (PPGI) awards the Qatar franchise of Gerry's Grill to Yvonne Salve Rapperto (third from left), managing director, SAQT Hospitality and Real Estate WLL. Also in the award are PPGI director Jerome Ng, Mark Alejandro and Gerry's Grill general manager Jonnem Pimentel. The branch is the first in the Middle East. Visit www.gerrys.com.

'Print for Smiles' fundraiser

OPERATION SMILE Philippines has helped thousands of Filipino children with cleft lips and palates get reconstructive surgery. Canon Marketing Philippines, through its "Print for Smiles" project supports Operation Smile.

It will hold Print for Smiles on Dec. 9-11 at SM Mall 1. They will allow the public to access discounted printing that is up to 80 percent cheaper than market price.

Photos can be printed on canvas or satin-semi-gloss photo paper through Canon Image PROGRAF large format printer. Digital images should be ready for printing with the size at 1.8" X 24" and 300 dpi.

Printing prices are at P288 for satin semi-gloss photo paper and P500 for canvas printing. Proceeds of this event will go to Operation Smile Philippines.

ETSY sale while shopping for the holidays with Puzzle bags which are created with security in mind. Its innovative cloud-proof features include wire mesh slash guard, a Kevlar cage system, smart zippers, patented smart flap hooks. It comes in an variety of styles and colors. Available in Rustan's. Call 9119495, visit www.pacsafe.com.

LIFESTYLE Home & Entertaining

Furniture you can show off–for the right price

STORY ON PAGE E2

What's on your wristmas list?

Swatch Seasons Special

On Derek Ramsay: SWATCH New Gent Golden Rebel

ALL THAT GLITTERS: GOLD AND SILVER IN SWATCH SEASONS SPECIAL

Swatch has created a Seasons Special Collection that captures the opulence and magic of shared celebrations, in a look that rides fashion waves for two 2012. Including two watches—a golden New Gent and a silver Gent—the Seasons Special has confetti warmth and charisma.

A ray of light among the subdued palettes of winter, the golden New Gent Golden Rebel features a golden all-over strap and a sun-brushed golden dial. The complementary silver Gent Shimmer Ray, is a handsome, cool-toned companion with sun-brushed silver dial and silver silicone strap.

And of course, because it's Swatch...it's Swiss Made.

SWATCH is available at SWATCH Stores in SM Megamall, Galleria 4, Greenbelt 5 and Trinoma; SWATCH Kiosks in SM Mall of Asia, SM Aura, SM North EDSA, SM City Davao, Glorietta 5, Trinoma, Starmall, Power Plant Mall, Greenhills V-Mall, Shangri-La Plaza, Robinsons Plaza, Eastwood, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Festival Mall and Ayala Center, Cebu, and HOLE IN THE WALL Shops in Alabang Town Center and Ayala Marquee Mall, Angeles, Pampanga.

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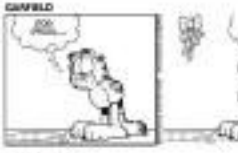
GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS



A. UPH — BY JESS ARBOA

PUGAD BARDY — BY PH. LOUCA

DICK TRACY — BY JOE STATON AND MIKE CLARK

LOVE-MOTS — BY ELIZABETH HORNGLD

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

RIKO MACHINE — BY IVAN ABREN

SEIH — BY DANIEL SHELTON

MUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

DILBERT — BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TOLDJA — BY MARK COLL

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 20) This is an excellent day for business and commerce. It's also a good day to relax for a long time and enjoy your reputation as a gentleman/lady.

TAURUS (April 21 to May 20) The Moon is in your sign today, bringing you a little bit of extra good luck. Today would be a wonderful day to schedule an appointment with a physician, dentist, hairdresser, beautician or cosmetologist.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Work behind the scenes today to make improvements at home. Someone you might give you the money to the assistance you need to do the work.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Plan a wonderful, event day for your dear friend for the company of others. Hobbies with partners, siblings and neighbors are warm. It's a good day to ask someone to marry.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Pleasure is authority will make you in a positive way today. You could lead to bonding with a new friend or colleague. Be open to the ideas of others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Be sure to avoid being too critical of others today. Your perfectionist tendencies could make you unpopular with those around you. Lighten up.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) This is a good day to get a head start on some something from someone. Invest, etc., and are inclined to do you a favor today. It's always good to have an open mind and be receptive.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Your home is a good place to be today. Spend time with family and friends are spread out. Today is a friendly day!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Work environment and conditions are unpredictable today. This is why it's wise to be alert and ready to make quick improvements to authority figures. Some of you can earn more money today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Make some positive, creative alterations, social appearance, alcohol and drugs are not a good thing today for health reasons and have effect. This is the perfect day to have fun!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You might enjoy socializing on some today. It's possible you will want to make some plans. This is a warm, fun day!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) This is a strong day for those of you who are creative artists, musicians and dancers. Excitement day for those who strive for others. Another ideas are in the air.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3×3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs or www.sudoku.com

Conceptis Sudoku — By Dave Green

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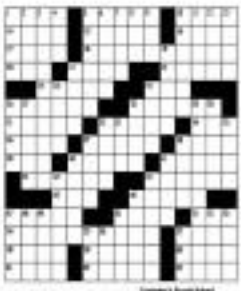
Difficulty Level ★★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Furniture you can show off–for the right price

B&B Italia offers high-end, iconic Italian pieces–and the conservative, moneyed market is lapping them up

By Margie C. Enriquez
Lifestyle Editor

IN THE LATE '80s and early '90s, the design team of Filaine Tan and Josiane Wee became famous for the interiors of such dicers as Subway and Billboard and boutiques such as 23 R.C. and Freeway.

Weary of interior designing, they took a sabbatical and would sometimes stay in bed until the afternoon, waiting for a new opportunity. So keep busy they were active in the Chamberlain community.

"We were on a spiritual journey and prayed, 'Lord, please give us a business,'" recalls Tan.

One day, a common friend hinted that an agent from B&B Italia, a high-end Italian furniture company, would be in town, looking for local representation. Although he had had previous discussions with another group of prospective partners, the stares met up with the Italian businessman.

He was impressed with their knowledge of B&B Italia's products. It also helped that they were related to the family Tan became business in Brussels. He saw the difference between the sisters' enthusiasm and savvy and that of the other business group. Then, their company Schlaire International Inc. was given the rights of exclusive distributor for B&B Italia.

Filaine and Josiane bravely went on a buying spree for their initial merchandise, despite the fact that they didn't have solid capital. Their Taiwanese father never supported them. In December 1998, he relented from gall bladder complications. He enjoyed that his stocks he sold to be given to the children. The inheritance became their seed money for their furniture store in Salcedo Village, Makati City.

"When we opened in 1997 at the height of the Asian crisis, the clients were shocked at the prices. Over time, they got used to it," recalls Josiane. "The business was slow—one to three visitors a week—but we never closed."

Filaine Tan (right) boutique had pulled out due to the economic uncertainty. On the other hand, the sisters trusted their instincts, knowing that there would finally be a demand for high-end Italian furniture. They started advertising, and B&B Italia's reputation spread by word of mouth.

In the '90s, the minimalist fashion and the influx of Italian labels introduced a different aesthetic to the Filipinos. The market was getting exposed to a restrained color palette and streamlined silhouettes. The early clients were designers and well-traveled businessmen who were buying today.

"The necessity of the clients then was to buy what would be showcased—items for the living room," says Filaine.

Timeless

Through the years, Ashtons International expanded its lines to include Maxalto, a brand by B&B Italia that exudes a straightforward and timeless look in fur-

PLEASE TURN TO E4

EXTENSIVE inventory sales are marked by the brand in low seating and linear elements that could be extended into set pieces, chaises and ottomans.

JUXTAPOSING Chaumin's Bay Sofa is marked by deep yet alluring and dual contrasting

DESIGN ICON. Bantam Peace's Sarlon hip chair and ottoman made of adjustable foam

GRANDE Papilio by Naoto Fukasawa has play of proportions with its conical shape and curved back and matching ottoman.

A Talent for Cooking

Given his boyish handsomeness and ham physique, Sean Patrick Sicio, 23, is often mistaken for a male model. But Sean, the new face of Dream Constructs, is a real-life chef. He studied at the CCA-SURR a passion for cooking on top of his industrial design degree. One of the important reasons he learned in culinary school is CCA: It will make to add tons of flavor; It replaces pork cans because all the flavors and drippings are in it; It enhances your sauces for a full-bodied flavor. Of all the meals he's tasted but didn't cook, his team was young, a Chinese dish with everything evil, is unbeatable. So too is the only constructs he trusts, Dream Constructs, which is ideal for breading, baking and thickening.

Banking On the Go

APP OF THE WEEK
BPI Express Mobile Banking

BPI

FEATURES

2nd micro-finance center to rise in Tagum City

THE BANCO de Oro foundation has donated properties in the Center for Agriculture & Rural Development Mutuality Incubating Development Institute (CARD-MRDI) to build micro-finance centers which will become the venue for information and skills-development programs for micro-finance practitioners and for training programs in financial consultancy and education that will jumpstart the empowerment of small-scale business endeavors.

The first such center was built in Bay, Laguna, with small-scale entrepreneurs (mostly women) regularly undergoing training in basic accounting, given access to markets in running small business ventures, such as farm animal raising, retailing, tailoring and running street restaurants.

In the first quarter of this year, BDO donated a 4,000 sq m property to build a second center in Tagum, Davao. Aside from the property donation, BDO Foundation disbursed P5.8 million cash to finish construction of the three-story edifice with a floor area of 753.

The increasing number of marginalized individuals, who want to engage in business but have no access to capital to start their business, has prompted private individuals, corporations and entrepreneurs to offer ways to ensure that practical education is given to such individuals before loans are granted to them, so that they can manage their small-scale businesses to profitability.

Because loans are now available to them, it is important that "sustainability is maintained to make their small ventures subsist," said Dr. Jaime Aristotle Alip, president of CARD, who, along with Edsel Ramos, CBC chairman emeritus, accepted a Deed of Donation from Nestor Ongpin de la Paz Bermudez, member of the board of trustees, and Maureen Abelardo, president and trustee of BDO foundation.

Teresita T. Sy-Coson, chairperson of Banco de Oro Unibank and foundation chairman, was on hand to witness the signing and to congratulate the 30 members of the CARD-MRDI of Bay Laguna, who have been successful entrepreneurs in Pagsanjan, Laguna and Tagaig.

Lydia Mendoza, owner of a food-vending store in Pagsanjan, unemployed husband in front of a BDO branch, said there are 1,000 members in Pagsanjan in 51 centers, all reporting to the multi-center in Bay. She has been a member for the past eight years. She started with a P5,000 loan which she has fully paid. Loans obtained for livelihood endeavors are paid either in cash or kind. She says she considers with CARD-MRDI staff regularly to monitor the profitability of her venture and gets additional capital from the center for business expansion.

TERESITA T. Sy, BDO Unibank and BDO Foundation's chairperson; Perla F. Toledo, foundation trustee; Mary Jane Ferrera, president/CEO-CARE-SME Bank; Maureen C. Abelardo, foundation president, and Corazon de la Paz-Bermudez, BDO Unibank vice chairperson and foundation trustee

LYDIA Mendoza and Lumina Dizon

SIGNING the DOD were Edsel A. Ramos, CBC emeritus director, CHDS; Jaime Aristotle B. Alip, Ph.D., president, CARD; Bernardo and Abelardo

Mag features holiday home designs

THE DECEMBER issue of My Home pays tribute to artists, designers, architects and allied professionals.

The magazine pays tribute to the period as a valuable Filipino art form. The magazine Style Guide commences the must-haves in home decor. As a special treat, Home Accessories Guide gives a shortlisted and categorized shopping list for home, while DIY recycles old holiday wrappers into stylish lighting accents. Tips and hints gives the proper guide for the after-Christmas cleanup.

Entertaining focuses this time on New Year's Eve ensemble. Blooms provides breathtaking arrangements for the perfect centerpiece.

My Home is published by the Mega Publishing Group. Visit www.myhomemag.com. Like us on *Facebook* (www.facebook.com/myhomemag) and follow us on *Twitter* (www.twitter.com/myhomemag).

Furniture you can show off —for the right price

From page E1

makers all the Bulgari hotels); Vidivi Bold, a German leather manufacturer; and Flou, which offers a wide assortment of beds. The store has developed its reputation for iconic pieces that are found in stylish homes.

Antonio Citterio's Charles sofa set the trend with its sleek silhouette, prodigious proportions, and sturdy support. "Other sofas tend to sag over time. This one stays in shape," says Pfannie, adding that it feels very firm on the posterior.

Jeanne points out that the Italian designers' classic Diesis sofa has been the most salable style. A triumph of engineering, it can easily shrink from 90 cm wide to 70 cm with two flaps.

Citterio's recent design is the Bowery chair, his take on the foldable diveuse's chair. Expressing his penchant for combining smooth round curves with boxy lines, the chair is a variation of soft chesterfield and a sturdy aluminum alloy frame.

Jean-Marie Massaud's Seven table is a curvilinear, three-sided table that can accommodate six and is only a person on the end.

Gaetano Pesce's classic Up chair is made from expandable foam that resembles a woman's silhouette. Patricia Urquiola's Lotus table has a glossy top with a prismatic design made from a Mio cut between two crystals. In outdoor living, Dedon appropriated the Spanish sweeping tradition and infused it into oversized chairs and sofas to create the Cassina collection.

The most homes took to glass walls providing homes with panoramic views of the scenery, the more brought in the Living Landscape modular sofas by Philippe Starck. They are more flexible in design, in the end parts and modules can be turned to be repositioned in any direction.

The store also carries the Basil's SE chair, popularized by the movie 'The Devil Wears Prada.'" Playing Vogue editor in chief, Meryl Streep's character sat on this minimalist version of the classic Tulip chair with its leather backed seat.

Market tastes

In the past few years, the market has been more discriminating when it comes to choosing furniture. Pfannie explained that affordable furniture is the consumer to choose each part of the bed and a variety of mattresses. "First has over 30 kinds of mattresses that offer support, from spring coil to memory foam. This store can provide better ventilation," says Pfannie.

The stores observe that the market is very conservative—favoring black, beige and gray pieces. A regular client, a maker and historical item, is known for its Asian contemporary homes with color schemes that are in beige, off-white and dark brown. Hence, the firm's choices of furniture are in the neutral and earth tones. The paintings in their homes are done by the usual suspects—National Artist Arturo Luz, Cuz Albor and Lee Llamzon, who also loves a non-traditional palette.

The Filipino market is still afraid of color. "We used to ban feminist colors. We saw like our grandmother's and boudoir, which looked nice on the exhibit. But here, we don't get to sell, as it's back in black and beige. In other countries, the upholstery comes in light green, yellow, purple because they have the four seasons. Why don't we buy purple linen or purple here? We have to adapt to the culture," says Pfannie.

Nonetheless, with the construction boom, the furniture business is thriving. The stores say a one-bedroom unit could be furnished for around P200,000 and a budget of P1.5 million for the basics—a best-seller sofa, dining set and bed.

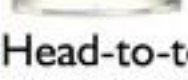
On the other hand, there are shoppers who don't need to look at the bottom line. One widow, after being accosted by a frugal husband, expressed her frustration by shrieking to HRH Bella pieces and changing the upholstery every season.

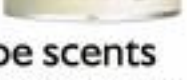
Where: Interni at the Bella showroom is at Crystal Tower, 107 EV de la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City; tel 8921187

Slim, sleek 'Hummingbird' now available

THE ACER Aspire S3, code named "Hummingbird," is now available in the Philippines. It is slim, sleek and lightweight.

Touted as the first "ultrabook" in the country, the "Hummingbird" uses the latest most powerful and energy saving chips from Intel, the world's largest semiconductor chip maker. Its features include the Acer Green Instant On, faster connectivity through "Instant Connect," a new cooling design and huge storage capacity.





Head-to-toe scents and skincare in a box

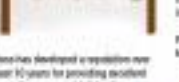
Leading aesthetic clinic Flawless has released the FOREVER Gift Set, a collection of fragrance products for the entire body that carry the subtle notes of lemon, jasmine, vanilla and violet.

The release of the gift set, which comes in an attractive wooden box, coincides with Flawless' 10th anniversary.

The box set contains the Forever Scent for Her, an energizing and charming fragrance of freshly squeezed lemons subtly covering delicate hints of jasmine and violets. The end result is harmonious, sweet and demure, yet pleasantly energetic, cheery and vivacious all at the same time.

A few sprays of Forever For Her will radiate with a charming appeal that speaks of the sentimental Filipina: kind, generous, lively and enchanting.

To complement the sweet charm of Forever For Her, the gift set also includes a lightening soap with the same subtle scent—and since Flawless has developed a reputation over the past 10 years for providing excellent skincare, the soap wouldn't be distinctly Flawless without its effective lightening properties.



Use the soap while bathing to make the skin radiant while making it smell glorious all at the same time. After bathing, slather on some of the Forever Lightening Lotion, perfect for both morning and evening use.

The skin is coached to exfoliate the same soft smell, and thanks to the exceptional formula of Flawless, the skin is rejuvenated and moisturized. The lotion has brightening effects as well for a luminous and radiant complexion.

The Forever Gift Set doesn't stop at body care; it ensures that the face is as fragrant and as soft as well. The set comes with Flawless' miracle-in-a-jar, deGrease, a mousse that besieges instant matte skin and the immediate relief of lines, wrinkles and other signs of aging.

The deGrease line-eraser is a first for the Philippine market, and is a great little item to keep in one's purse for touch-ups on the go.

Also included in the Forever Shine Powder, a refreshing and airspy loose powder to brighten the skin with hints of Blueberry and the same sweet Forever scent.

For gentlemen, Flawless has also developed Forever For Him Eau de Toilette, a mixture of musky overtones that compliment a subtle combination of amber, vanilla and vetiver. The end result is sexy, masculine, solid and stable.

Orders to Flawless' Forever set

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Evenie G. Velarde

Mobile Alert: Text INQ ENTERTAINMENT to 4467 | Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment | E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
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'Disney on Ice' returns with new show

THE ANNUAL Christmas treat "Disney on Ice" returns with a new show, "Let's Celebrate," starting Dec. 15, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. at the Smart Araneta Coliseum. Other dates are on Dec. 16-(2 p.m., 6 p.m.), 17-(10 a.m.) 18-(2 p.m., 6 p.m.), 20-(2 p.m., 6 p.m.), 30-(1 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 8 p.m.), and Jan. 1-(1 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 8 p.m.), 2-(2 p.m., 6 p.m.) and 3-(6 p.m.). Call 911-5555.

SHOW TIME

JOHN Lloyd Cruz finding more to say about Shaina

Playboy has eyes only for young playmates

By the Entertainment staff

POPULAR Playboy's "playmates" are getting younger. After breaking up with his latest conquest, Pinoy hunkie, PP was spotted in the company of Beautiful Inglesias.

He often gets involved with comedians and even figured in a messy entanglement in the past. PP, on the other hand, seems to have grown tired of older women and now has eyes for mobile girls.

The fact that PP and M were paired in a project was suspicious enough. Shortly after, a reader insists, they were caught being extra lovey-dovey in a resto.

Runway star

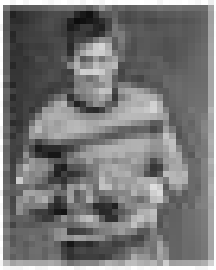
Controversial first star in a high profile event, befuddling with poise.

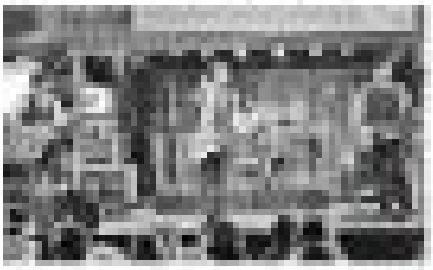
Insisting the presence of reporters at the venue, US suddenly disappeared—like she was avoiding debt collectors.

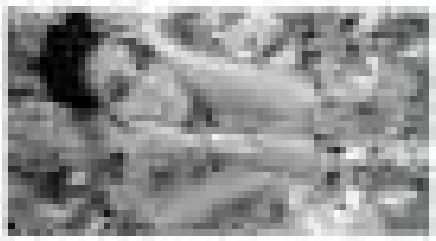
Several min. US had promised an exclusive interview to Staarch Operator and Starbits PR

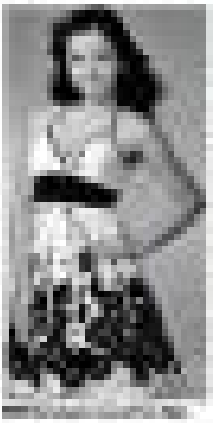
CARLA Abellana going the sexy route

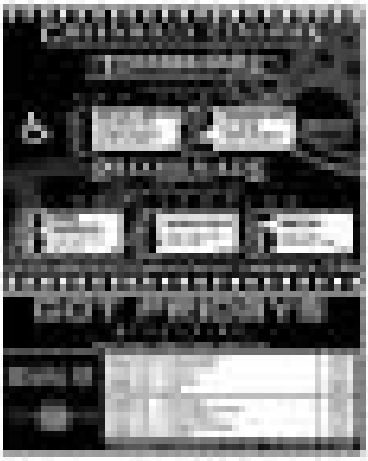
Playboy has eyes for younger 'playmates'

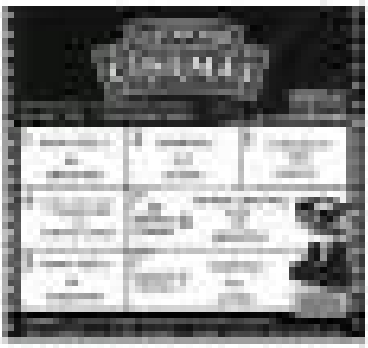


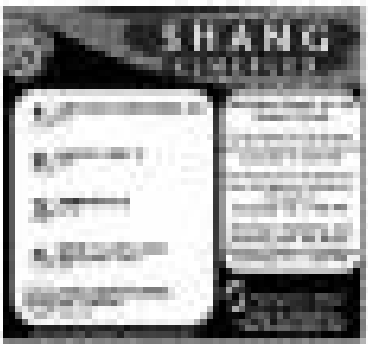


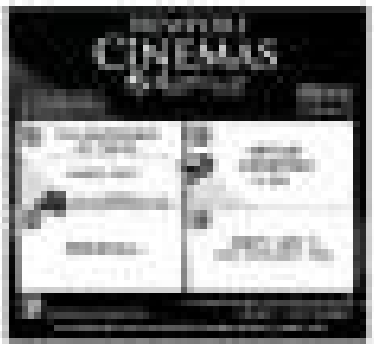


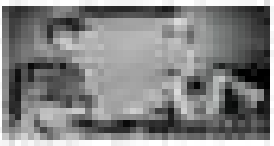


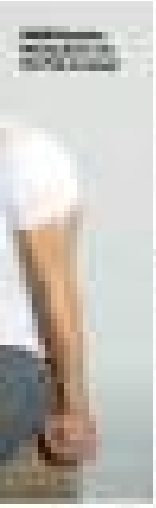


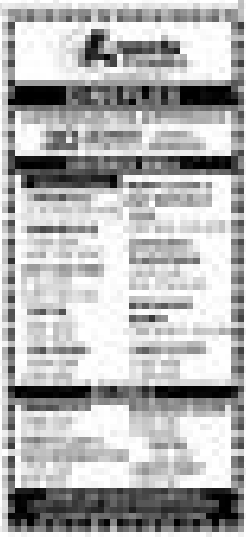












MOVIE TIME

MOVIE SPECIAL

MALL EVENTS

MALL SPECIAL

Gapo wants to have its own film fest soon

By Marinel R. Cruz

OLONGAPO City—With its forest, seaport, airport and bay, the public they Freeport Zone is the first place to build a film production studio similar to world renowned Universal Studios in California, according to Olongapo City Mayor James "Bong" Gordon Jr.

OLONGAPO City Mayor James "Bong" Gordon Jr.

COUNCILOR Bogie de la Torre

Gordon said it is for this reason that he invited American actor, director and producer John Garwood to see the place for himself.

Garwood first appeared in the 1987 action film "Hell's Angels on Wheels," starring Jack Nicholson. He acted in over 30 projects, the most recent of which was the TV series "Murder, She Wrote" in 1996. He produced four films, including the documentary "Crackdown" (2005) and the action flick "Violent Zone" (2008).

Gordon said Garwood first visited the city while filming "Crackdown." "When he returns, I will ask him to take a second look at Olongapo," Gordon said during the opening night of the "Cinemalaya sa Gapo" film festival held at the Convention Center here. "We have kinokno (for) the Americans left when they were driven off the base. We can convert them into small studios. There's money in movies."

Gordon said a booming tourism industry is important in a province like Olongapo "but for its product to sell."

'Only the beginning'

"We don't have an underground river like Palawan, or The Chocolate Hills of Bohol, but we have our forest and Subic Bay," he pointed out. "However, tourists will not prosper without culture and the arts. The city up my mode (Cinemalaya) is only the beginning. We hope to produce films ourselves. We want products that will excite tourists to come and stay on a visit."

"Cinemalaya sa Gapo" screened 14 independent films from Nov. 26-30 to entice locals for the homegrown festival's entries in the city, said Cinemalaya foundation president and festival director Noo Cardin.

Jardin added that in July, the Olongapo City government, led by councilors and Sentra executive committee chair Angry de los Reyes, proposed that Cinemalaya be brought to Olongapo.

He said the local government wants to discover and support young filmmakers and eventually collaborate with the Cinemalaya Foundation to conduct training programs.

CINEMALAYA Foundation president Noo Jardin

FILMMAKER Lawrence Fajardo

"We hope to screen Cinemalaya films yearly," said councilor Edsi Syzon, vice-chair of the Sentra committee. "The plan is to eventually make our own films and create what we would call a SineGapo film festival."

However, Flores, a professor at the University of the Philippines Film Institute, said he's aware of the amount of work required to make the project successful. "We'll have to conduct workshops and seminars, meet with resolvers and audience here. I'll have to arrange for them to attend classes on film appreciation and literacy."

Dela Cruz said "Cinemalaya sa Gapo" was only one of many activities during the city's week-long fiesta celebrations. There was also the SEA.G.L.se "Pesta artistang Gapo Ito," a talent search that showcased the talents of Olongapoeños in singing and dancing.

"The vision is to provide a means for communities to express their art, history and culture in a platform that will showcase Olongapo pride," said Dela Cruz. "We want to expose the youth to filmmaking in general, and to indie films in particular."

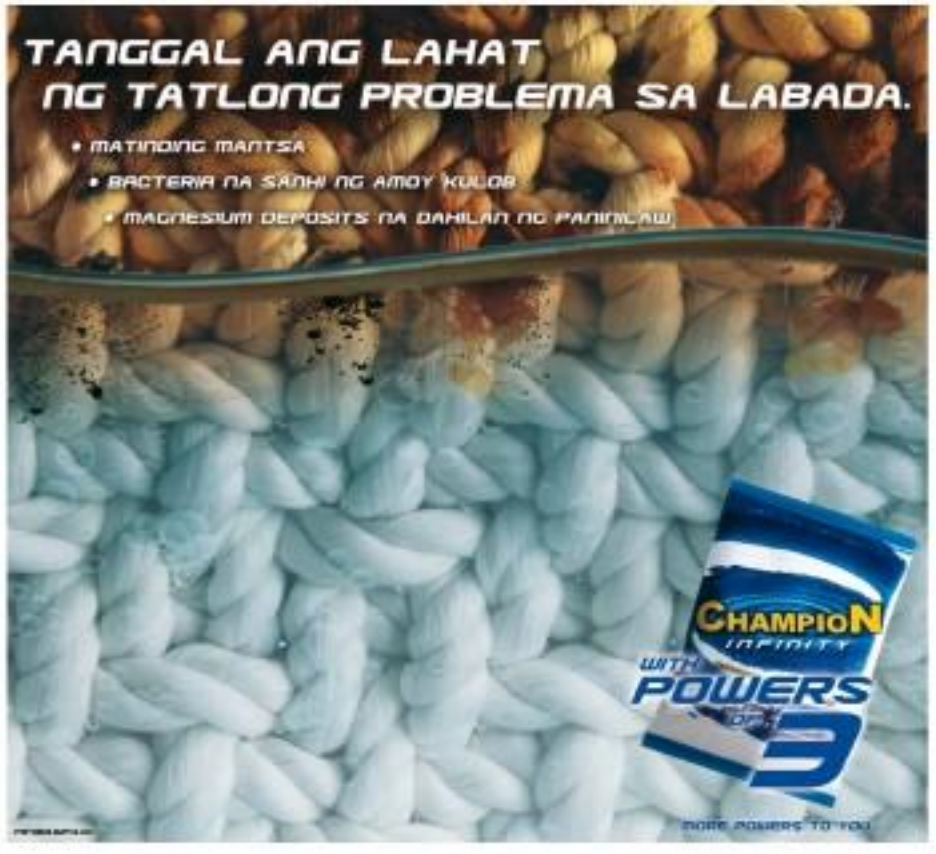
Cinemalaya's best film, "Ang Kuhar sa Septic Tank," was screened shortly after a dinner hosted by Gordon at the Convention Center. Present were actress Evelyn Vargas ("Jaile"), filmmaker Mido Escritor ("Nono" and "Nilo-Ilonte"), Cultural Center of the Philippines administrative head Fort Bancoro and "Nono" associate producer Lorenzo "Jon" Reyes.

E-mail: marinel@inquirer.com.ph

FILMMAKERS Mila Tolentino and Lynyrd Bello, and producers Lorenzo "Jon" Reyes and Monique Mallari

ACTRESS Evelyn Vargas

COUNCILOR Eric Flores



ENTERTAINMENT

LOVE GONE VERY WRONG Ria Teotico and Rhian Ramos in Greece early this year.

Rhian: Stop bugging me

Actress files restraining order vs ex-boyfriend who's acting up

By Boyet Sun Diego Jr.

GMA 7 actress Rhian Ramos has filed a temporary protection order suit against her ex-boyfriend, former TV5 host Melton "Mr. Twister" Guiterrez on Monday in Mandaluyong City.

Lorna Kapunan, Ramos' counsel, told the reporters that Ramos is asking the court to stop Guiterrez from further using the media and social networking sites in defense her.

Ramos also wants Guiterrez "to stop calling, texting and emailing" her.

Emotional violence

"He's still trying to get in touch with her," Kapunan said. "Hopefully it will have become a permanent protection order."

Kapunan said Guiterrez violated Republic Act No. 9262 (Violence Against Women and Children Act) by inflicting "psychological and emotional violence" on Ramos.

In a video posted online last week, Guiterrez claimed that Ramos had aborted their love child due to premature fears about business riders and her family. Guiterrez has expressed his desired upbraiding the video.

Ramos said Guiterrez's actions have traumatized her and her family. "More than what people have seen, Pia has[illegible] over a longer period of time," Ramos told the media. She pain was "unnecessary and embarrassed," she stressed.

'Final' statement

"The actress added that, by filing the case, she hoped to "put an end to the issue now, so that I can move on." Kapunan said Ramos would like Guiterrez to be able to do the same.

In his "final statement" released on Sunday, Guiterrez apologized to Ramos. "I'm sorry ... that our roller-coaster relationship ended the way it did ... But I love you. I always have."

Kapunan remarked that Guiterrez merely had a strange way of showing affection. "He's very inconsistent. He professes love, but has made Rhian two parent online."

In the statement, Guiterrez apologized to Gloria Sevilla, which earlier threatened to file a libel case against him. "The decision to have an abortion was not something the network instructed us to do," he said.

Sympathetic

But he went on to criticize Ramos' mother Gloria Ramos and actor Ida Ramos-Fernandez, head of GMA Artist Center, and blamed them for the abortion.

Kapunan put Guiterrez to task for not quoting Ramos' mother, who is a recovering cancer patient.

"Rhian said that this is between the two of them. Ms shouldn't involve other people in their quarrel," Kapunan said.

The whole issue, the lawyer pointed out, was "unpleasant to of a bigger problem."

Kapunan said it was important to file the case against Guiterrez only because no one is above the law. She elaborated: "If he is not afraid of media, he should be scared of the legal repercussions. Some personalities create scandals because they want to become media sensations."

Gabriela hands off

But they shouldn't violate the rights of other people to share space for lasting she said. "The problem with social networking sites [is that] people can easily deny any wrongdoing. But anything posted online can become a life of its own."

Kapunan hopes the scandal would die a natural death soon and that "next week, people will have another breaking to feast on."

Meanwhile, Gabriela, a party-list group for women, is distancing itself from the issue because it found the "charges baseless and its source doubtful." Gabriela party-list Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan, however, said the group would support Ramos "if she asks for help." With a report from Cliff Cobus-Aragon

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Pagcor sets guidelines for Entertainment City Manila

THE XODS TO XIII: Entertainment City Manila will have an independent committee from to ensure that the foot licensee is ordered in building it will follow the required construction standards, according to Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (Pagcor) chair and CEO Cristino Naguiat Jr.

DID YOU KNOW...

"This is to rationalize the project's implementation and assure a level playing field," said Naguiat. Entertainment City Manila, whose conveyance-related facilities will also cover shopping, dining, concerts, exhibits and gaming, is a Pagcor project.

The first companies granted licenses to build, own and operate integrated resorts in Entertainment City Manila are Travellers International Hotel Group, which owns Resorts World Manila, SM Consortium, Tiger Resorts, Leisure and Entertainment Inc., and Bloomberry Resorts and Hotels, Inc.

The Pagcor guidelines require a minimum $1 billion investment in each integrated resort. Each licensee is also required to build a minimum of 250,000 square meters of floor area and complete 800 hotel rooms with an average room area of 40 square meters. Everything must be in order before the casino inside the complex opens.

Naguiat added that Entertainment City Manila is projected to capture at least a 10 percent share in the total global gaming market, which is estimated at $175 billion annually. "We expect to generate 1 million jobs and 1 million tourists in the next few years," he said.

FOR THE FIRST time, KC Concepcion lost her signature cool and showed a softer side.

So, how come we aren't surprised?

Unfortunately, even as she weepily tried to explain why she broke off with Piolo, KC provided few precious details to clarify the situation

Victor U. Torre

LAST NOV 27, KC Concepcion cried herself a motion and indisposition from on "The Buzz," finally confirming persistent rumors that her romance with Piolo Pascual had turned ugly and sour—and gone kaput. This, after great efforts, largely on her part, to keep the relationship viable, despite the many problems hovering it.

So, how come we aren't surprised?

Flashback to the first time that the then giddily loving celebrity couple first announced that they were "on." That early, we wondered why most of the reactions to that "fully worthy" revelation intimated that KC was lucky to win reverence's Papa P.

Hey, just a minute here, we protested at the time, why was it being implied that Piolo was the bigger catch? In our un-lofty view, they were both lucky.

And, in a sense, Piolo was even the luckier one, because KC came to their new relationship with her show biz presence, persona, promise and smart, while he had more issues baggage, like his love child and his "settled" earlier ways.

We were reportedly amazed by some of Piolo's fans for that observation, but we held our ground. And, we wished the new couple well, because we knew from past, and experience how difficult it is to keep a celebrity romance afloat, when everybody and his mandirs more and gay no think that running pinky, teary to embarrass in the affair is their business—and birthright!

Talking in code

Then, in the succeeding weeks and months, the KC-Piolo romance went on a roller-coaster ride of happy highs and roller lows, occasionally laced with inhuman silences which gave the impression that, while love was still in the air, the romance wasn't as romantic as before, because "temperamental," according from KC's camera, weren't being mean.

Was Piolo, in earlier hazed, too set in his ways to accommodate his younger and more romantic inamorata?

When KC talked about the troubled romance, it was "in code," because she didn't want to hurt anybody—so little truly clarifying help could be had. Thus, the situation continued to degenerate and matter until KC woefully and with finality revealed that the bloom was off the rose between her and him.

Unfortunately, even as she weepily tried to explain why she broke off with Piolo, KC provided precious few facts and details that truly clarified the situation enough for viewers to understand why she had decided to end the relationship, beyond a general prerogative to pain. Dictated representations and an insufficient lexicon of known and unsaid.

Was she still trying to make sure that nobody got hurt, even if it was obvious that she herself was emotionally blank and tense?

She did, for the first time, lose her signature cool and show his problems, confessed that she was angry and declared that "PJ knows exactly what led to the breakup." But, most of her other "revelations" were still couched in "code"—so, the "true confessions" ended with viewers still in the dark, groping for the light.

Well, if that's all that the private individual wish to share, that's ultimately their business —even if this business is one of show and tell.

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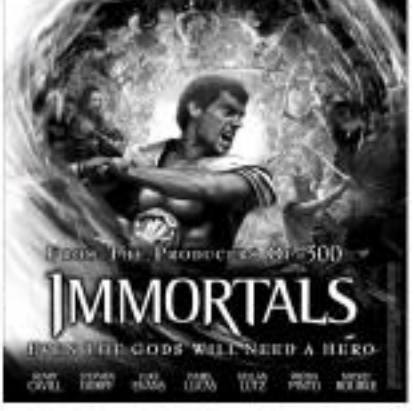

Sid Lucero on sis Andi: She's tough

By Marinel R. Cruz

ACTOR Sid Lucero regards his younger half-sister Andi Eigenmann as one tough girl.

"She can very well take care of herself," Lucero says of Andi, 21, who delivered baby girl Ashanté Gabrielle on Nov. 23. "It's raining sole between us a lot, if anyone need to know. But, you know, we're tame ang mangal."

Lucero, son of actress Elaine Ed and Ricky Eigenmann (Andi is Meng's daughter with Jaclyn Jose), admits that among his siblings, he is the most affectionate toward Andi. "I guess it's because I seldom see her—so I get very attached. I don't have myself to be her boyo. It's not always good to act like a big brother because sometimes you need to comfort ..."

The actor says he supports Andi in whatever she does like gave birth. "First thing I told her when she got into the business was, 'This is good, huh? You make your own money, you support yourself.' If she decides to come back, I might remind her that she's no longer working just for herself but also for her first child."

Andi's experience as a mom will make her an even better actress, Lucero believes. "She's gone through a lot. She'll be better than ever in terms of channeling life experiences."

Lucero is regularly seen in the drama series "Amaya." He is also the lead actor in Dennis Marasigan's "Ramanyang Kawapuso," an entry to the currently-concluded Cinema One Originals Film Festival.

Set in the 1900s, the film is about young lady Amaya Cebu (Dimples Romana) who joins the Family Court in Imerang, officers Elio Imerso (her ate of convenience by disposing of cases expeditiously, robbing them of opportunities to make money. Musicia) was best actress, and costar Jojit Lorenzo, best supporting actor, at the festival.

"The character Rick is one of the main lawyers in the movie," Lucero relates. "He will not break the law but he will bend it as much as he can. This happens all over the world, but here would admit it."

Asked whether he's more comfortable doing indie films than mainstream projects, Lucero says he finds no difference between the two. "There are two kinds of films, as far as I can see—the kind that [aims to] make money and then artistic stories to tell a good story."

He cites the case of Mikaya J. delos Reyes' "Red Diamond" (2011), which was entered by mainstream The Philippine Movement Voice, premiered its screening, claiming that one of the three episodes is a direct insult to the force.

"I don't think we were set to kill other economic, sociological with the camera," says Lucero. "You see, there's little point in attempting to communicate with just one section, instead of with the whole world."

SID Lucero says it's not always good to act like a big brother.

Tempting Baron

Returning actor goes indie in 'Asiong Salonga'

By Boyet Sacdalan

ON HIS first day on the set of Tikoy Aguiluz's "Manila Kingpin: The Asiong Salonga Story," actor Baron Geisler said the scene involved a drinking spree.

On his fourth month of rehabilitation program at the time, Geisler assumed scene as the star scene brought out cases of beer and laid out the bottles on the table.

So there he was, in 1950s costume, being tempted with alcohol. "It was so laughing matter," he admitted, but he coped rather well. "Kaya siguro, I just wanted to work."

In fact, Geisler had been apprehensive about accepting "Asiong Salonga," an entry in this December's Metro Manila Film Festival.

Gangster film remake

As the period film—a remake of the gangster flick that made Joseph Estrada a star in 1965—Geisler plays Asiong Salonga's son, Antot Baron Geisler said the scene involved a drinking spree.

Geisler was similarly impressed with the lead actor and the film's producer, Legaspi Cori, George "ER" Ilustre.

"We used to play gun-boot killers in [old movies]," Geisler noted. "In this one, I think he shows class and consistency. We'd all watch as Gov. ER and Tikoy worked. The results were always astounding. Won't let it ruin."

The production company agreed to sequence, Geisler said. "They brought in Jong Ka Vino, a Kpop instructor from Hong Kong who worked on [the Hollywood flicks] 'Bangkok Dangerous' and

NEW and improved Baron Geisler in character as Enteng Tandapich

'The Scorpion King 2.' Jerel Shiva sinu-na-a-ware-the Khan brothers abroad."

Plus, the production design team nominated 1950s Quiapo in Pagsanjan, Laguna.

Geisler may join the cast of endless Agustin Epavins collaboration, the Emilio Aguinaldo biopic "El Presidente," due for release next year.

Aguiluz said, "When I brought up his name for casting, a lot of people objected. He couldn't be a headache date." But Ilustre prevailed, Aguiluz said. "Baron has strong screen presence. I'm happy with [his performance]."

Juday ready to have third child, but says work makes it hard

By Marinel R. Cruz

ACTRESS Judy Ann Santos, who gave birth to son Luabo last year, is ready to have another baby with her husband, TV host Ryan Agoncillo. They have a 9-year-old adopted daughter, Yohan.

"I'll be 39 in May," Judy Ann told reporters. "If another baby comes, Heavenly Acknowledgment. But as much as Ryan and I want a big family, it's hard to raise children these days, especially in my kind of work where nothing is permanent."

The actress hosts the cooking show "Juana Manok Chef" (Sun.) [illegible]" on ABS-CBN, which is down to 12 episodes from its opening. Shaina Magdayao, Gerlie Tolentino, Eunice Rosqui, Isa Johnston, Jovan Johnston, Kyle Jones, Mika Travels, Mike Magtibay, Patrick Bakkerman, Philip Amarello and Tessa Rebadavia.

What can we expect from the show at this point?

There will be more interesting changes for the kids. They already know a lot of cooking techniques; the next rounds will be harder.

You lost a lot of weight. How did you do it?

I'm back to 120 lbs. my weight before I got pregnant. I go to the gym, I jog. If I have free time. I also do yoga. Ryan encourages me. He

JUDY Ann Santos and husband Ryan want a big family

pic, but they're not the majority.

Did you ever consider leaving your home network at some point?

All actors go through it. There will always be people from different camps who will try to convince you to "transfer, but it will all depend on you. I refused leaving, considered it many times, when I didn't see eye to eye with my bosses in ABS-CBN. But things always get sorted out in the end.

("Juana Manok Chef" airs at Saturday 9:30 p.m. after "Pinoy Dream Academy" and Sunday night after "Sam Milby".)

Erik Santos is still able to consult, 'talk as friends,' with ex-manager

By Marinel R. Cruz

ERIK Santos said of [illegible] between him and TV host Boy Abunda, who used to head the talent management group Backroom Inc. that managed his career for over seven years.

Santos ended his business relationship with Backroom in August, and is now [illegible] ABS-CBN's Star Magic group and Cornerstone Talent Management Group. Abunda said his talent agency had to release the singer because he "underutilized the talent and tied its

A STOIC Baron Geisler (right) gamers the first hostilities between retinue of him for a scene in "Asiong Salonga," with lead star Jean-ga (Carmyan (third from left).